

# LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND THE GLOBALIZATION OF 'STANDARD' SPANISH

DARREN PAFFEY



ADVANCES IN SOCIOLINGUISTICS SERIES EDITOR: TOMMASO M. MILANI

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Language Ideologies and the  
Globalization of 'Standard' Spanish

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# Language Ideologies and the Globalization of 'Standard' Spanish

Darren Paffey

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# List of Abbreviations

ASALE	Association of Spanish Language Academies ( <i>Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española</i> )
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CILE	International Congress of the Spanish Language ( <i>Congreso Internacional de la Lengua Española</i> )
CIN	Ibero-American Community of Nations ( <i>Comunidad Iberoamericana de Naciones</i> )
DPD	Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts ( <i>Diccionario panhispánico de dudas</i> )
DRAE	Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Language Academy ( <i>Diccionario de la Real Academia Española</i> )
IC	The Cervantes Institute ( <i>Instituto Cervantes</i> )
PLP	Panhispanic Language Policy ( <i>Política lingüística panhispánica</i> )
RAE	Royal Academy of the Spanish Language ( <i>Real Academia Española</i> )
SLI	Standard language ideology





# Introduction

This book is about the ideologies, institutions and media discourse related to language in the Spanish-speaking world. It examines how ideologies about language use are manifested in the media, taking as a case study the language ideological debates that appear in the Spanish media. In particular, the book considers how the discussion and presentation of language-related debates are largely framed by a number of influential institutions, chief among them being Spain's language academy, the Real Academia Española (RAE). This institution's discourse can be seen as a set of language ideological debates in which the RAE, as a language authority, produces definitive representations of what the Spanish language is, and what it 'should' be like, and spreads these not only in its own publications and activities, but through print and online media. The RAE's vision of global Spanish in the twenty-first century depends on a number of recurring themes about its nature which are naturalized and are accepted not only in public discourse through widespread repetition in the Academy's various practices, but also in Spain's news media. Such 'common-sense' beliefs about Spanish are being spread far beyond Spain via the globally available media outlets, two of which serve as case studies in this book: the national daily newspapers *El País* and *ABC*. By examining the media coverage of language matters from these publications, it becomes clear that the RAE's institutional discourse reinforces its own authority as the leader of contemporary standardization of the Spanish language around the world. This centralization of linguistic authority is occurring simultaneously with a rescaling and expansion of standardization practices which transcend the nation-state paradigm in pursuit of a 'total Spanish' shaped by panhispanic norms applicable to the entire Spanish-speaking world.

The book is a contribution to the existing and growing literature on language ideologies, which in recent years has sought to 'unpack the workings of language

in the context of social processes' (Milani and Johnson 2010: 3). Focus is given to the workings of ideological language and discourse around the issue of 'standardization', and what this term really means in the contemporary era in which Spanish has become not only a language of global significance outside its native-speaking territories, but also one which continues to grow numerically and in influence across Europe, the United States of America and beyond. These ideological debates broach the status and role of Spanish in a world that has become indelibly marked by the social processes of globalization, and so the debate will have moved on from the initial concepts around standardization in recent centuries which developed mostly in contexts of nation- and empire-building projects. It is of interest to this study, then, how language itself is being reconceptualized as it is subjected to the global processes of exposure to commercial markets, trends, contexts, demands and discourses. And not only language, but also the globalizing social processes in question are having an effect on the definition of – and relationship between – language users, learners, craftspeople and authorities who manage the use of language. I will therefore be asking what the ideological, social and political factors are which impact upon and inform the public debates about language standardization, and also the debates and practices of standardizing institutions and agencies such as the RAE.

## Language standardization

An important caveat to mention in this introduction is that this study does not set out to discuss whether it is 'right' or 'wrong' to have a standardized language. Standardization – which I define and discuss in Chapter 2 – is first and foremost an ideology, but equally it is one which provokes very real responses, practices and policies. Standardization is a process which has been carried out and subsequently repeated in many speech communities over recent centuries on many different language varieties. There are undoubtedly claims that standard languages are advantageous to many (e.g. efficiency of communication, language as a tool for education and skills, social mobility), as well as claims that the process of standardization presents disadvantages for others (e.g. language shift and death, polarization of prestigious 'standard' versus 'substandard' varieties, discrimination against 'non-standard' speakers). However, as Cameron claims:

We must shift the terrain for debates . . . so that instead of asking 'should we prescribe?' (a question Marenbon quite reasonably counters with another – 'what is the alternative?'), we pose searching questions about

who prescribes for whom, what they prescribe, how and for what purposes.  
(Cameron 1995: 11)

One of the specific objectives of this book, then, is to add to the debate on language standardization by understanding more about whose standards shape this process, and by what means. There is now a growing amount of scholarship concerning these questions, and it is indeed an important issue to address because of the way that language standards play such a crucial part in contemporary societies. Lippi-Green notes how ‘there is little debate at all about who sets the standards for spoken and written language, standards which have been the focus of legislation, *standards which affect our everyday lives*’ (Lippi-Green 1997: 6, my emphasis). This debate has in fact been opened further by important contributions from Blommaert (1999c), Blommaert et al. (2006), Milroy (2001), and Milroy and Milroy (1999). So not only is it my desire that this book should build on this important scholarship by providing another response to Lippi-Green’s observation and identifying a number of possible agents responsible for language standards that might be found in any given nation-state context, but it is also my belief that it is possible to do this by considering the contemporary case of the Spanish language in particular. This specific focus is necessary because of the gap in knowledge noted by Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman:

To date, in the Hispanic intellectual context, there has been a remarkable absence of in-depth critical studies of the ideological/political foundations and implications of linguistic standardization. (2002a: xiii)

My aim, then, is to arrive at a fuller recognition of how processes of standardization are shaped in and by the contemporary context of the Spanish-speaking world, and how standardization takes place and is spread through the activities of institutions founded in order to standardize the language, chief among these being the RAE. Assuming that – despite the ubiquity of dictionaries and other language guides in most Spanish homes, schools and workplaces – the forewords, prefaces and epilogues of the Academy’s (and others’) authoritative reference publications are seldom if ever read (Lodares 2005: 114), this book will demonstrate that the media is a primary vehicle for the spread of ideologies about the Spanish language. The newspaper media represents the tension between *national* and *transnational/global* levels: it is a product which is predominantly concerned with and physically distributed within individual nation-states, yet which must also reflect global concerns and be accessible to a global readership through the export of printed copies and the availability of digital versions via the internet. As such, the press is a

remarkably powerful and widespread vehicle of ideological transmission, not least in matters of language, which has led Bell to claim that newspapers are 'language forming institutions' (1991: 7).

The media is an essential site of investigation because the story of language in its contemporary context is seen in practices which are, as Blommaert notes, 'performed by identifiable actors, in very specific ways, and by means of very specific instruments' (1999a: 426). The press, as this book will show, is one of those 'very specific instruments' by which the story of standard Spanish and global Spanish can be told, and in which language ideological debates take place. Another concern of this book, then, is to understand how the discourse of language authorities in the Spanish press is permeated with ideological framings, presuppositions and expressions of the worldview of discourse producers. Fairclough's argument is that 'ideology is pervasively present in language' (2001: 2), and so the way in which language is used – as well as how it is discussed on a metadiscursive level – in texts and overarching discourses related to the discussion of the Spanish language is a fascinating domain in which to critically analyse texts and their ideological processes of production.

Of course, the purpose of any book is not restricted to being merely an academic exercise, and it is envisaged that the case study examined in this volume will necessarily trigger greater awareness of powerful social and linguistic processes at work within a number of domains, primarily language academies, media, education and wider society. First, in terms of the application to language academies, the questions raised and discussed here will usefully contribute to an appraisal of the approach to regionally/nationally marked lexical items in dictionaries and other standardizing publications. Thus far, the RAE's leadership and production of these has led to a Spain-centric focus with items which are specific to other varieties from the Spanish-speaking world marked as such, but with Spain-specific items remaining unmarked, signalling their acceptance as part of a 'default' variety of Spanish. The reconfiguration of standardization discourse which has taken place, and which has come to characterize Spanish as a *global* language necessitates a rethinking of concepts of language ownership and 'centres' of norms, and this study offers significant considerations as to why. Second, the findings of this study can be applied to the news media, and in particular to both the producers and consumers of this highly influential means of mass communication. What is important here is that readers should be better informed as to how the principal arguments and textual features of press articles are structured, and consequently they should be better

equipped to discern how these arguments serve to naturalize the ideology of Spanish language standardization, and spread this vision of language through the everyday press. Third, educational institutions have, as many scholars have recognized, played an indispensable role in the construction, maintenance and progress of nation-states throughout the past few centuries, and continue to do so in the contemporary world. The general expectation is that schools promote particular sets of values and standards in order to shape a nation-state's future citizens. Such 'standards' include those related to 'acceptable,' prestigious language varieties, and are based on the implementation of implicit or explicit language policies which consequently influence attitudes to the different varieties. However, only through recognizing the ideological nature of language attitudes can those within the education system – be they students, educators or policy-makers – come to an awareness of how dominant ideological discourses are enshrined in the linguistic culture of what is acceptable, as well as educational curricula, textbooks and other official educational materials which often drown out competing discourses. Acceptance or contestation of hegemonic ideologies should take place on the basis of a more informed understanding of how they work, and to this end, I will examine how prominent conceptualizations of the Spanish language arrive at a position of hegemony. Finally, the observations and findings of this book are applicable to employment practices and other situations in which language use is often a criteria for success or failure due to the classification of a person's speech, writing or perceived language variety as 'correct/right/acceptable' or 'incorrect/wrong/unacceptable'. In these cases, language can become a tool of exclusion and discrimination, and so it is vital that we understand how standard language ideology works so as to be able to challenge it where it is in evidence, be it within or outside of the Spanish-speaking world that is the focus of this volume.

## The Spanish language context

The Spanish language is experiencing one of the highest points of its history: it has more than 440 million speakers and is the official language of 21 countries, now establishing itself in the U.S. and Brazil too. Experts, scholars and leaders have become aware of the cultural and economic value of the language, as well as its social profitability in the Spanish-speaking world. (Miguel Ángel Noceda, *El País* 5 November 2006<sup>1</sup>)

The confident and positive outlook for the Spanish language encapsulated in this quotation provides the important context in which this study is situated. The Spanish language is seen to be growing today in terms of its number of speakers, its popularity as a choice for second-language learners, the breadth of functions it is required to fulfil and the influence this language exerts as it 'competes' in a global market of prominent languages such as English, French, Arabic and Chinese. However, there are several significant questions that arise from a critical reading of the citation from *El País* above, which challenge the various presuppositions embedded within it. For example, when we talk or read about Spanish using the term *español*, what exactly is meant by this? Is this synonymous with or distinct from Castilian (*castellano*), and other varieties such as Mexican Spanish, Chilean Spanish, and so on? To what extent does each of these form part of the Spanish-speaking world as an overall concept? If there is indeed a cultural and economic value of the language to be enjoyed, who exactly is benefiting from this value and profitability? And who are these experts who have decided on its value?

Underpinning all of these questions are issues relating to the processes and events which have brought about the contemporary global configuration of the Spanish language and the Spanish-speaking world. These processes include the definition, standardization, promotion and spread of language in the contemporary age, and key events related to these processes include the establishment of the RAE, its modernization at the turn of the twenty-first century, the establishment of language policies in Spain and Spanish-speaking former colonies around the world, and the expansion of printed and online media. The emergence of language standardization as an ideology and a process was tied to nation-building periods of seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the start of the twenty-first century, however, when social, political and economic ideologies and contexts across Spanish-speaking countries have changed so drastically since those past centuries, it is important to identify what has changed (or remained the same) about the events and discourses of standardization as such an enduring linguistic phenomenon.

### **A potted history of Spanish**

It was during the era of the Roman Empire that Classical Latin evolved into the Vulgar Latin varieties that became the languages of Iberia (Roman name: Hispania). The *Reconquista* of the Iberian peninsula from the Moorish occupation of the eighth to fifteenth centuries led to the consolidation of Castilian power

through the marriage of the Catholic Monarchs and the unification of their respective kingdoms. The Reconquista was also the springboard to Columbus's 1492 departure westward, and the subsequent expansion and colonization of what were to become the Spanish-speaking Americas. The enthusiastic Spanish nation-building project included the consolidation of a standard Castilian Spanish, which, from the thirteenth century onwards, was the official language in works of science, literature and administration.

By 1492, Castilian had, for many, become synonymous with the Spanish language, and Antonio de Nebrija published the first grammar (*La Gramática de la Lengua Castellana*) representing an important use of the print medium as a step towards the strengthening of a national language. During the so-called Golden Age of Castilian literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, variation in writing was levelled, and the language and national identity of Spain was consolidated through the standardized code and linguistic culture in Spain and its colonies. The establishment in 1713 of the *Real Academia de la Lengua Española* was key in coupling the realities of the Spanish nation and its designated state language. King Philip V's royal seal on the Academy came just 90 years after a secret memo was passed to his predecessor, Philip IV, by the Conde Duque de Olivares, advising the king to 'secretly plan and work to reduce these kingdoms of which Spain is composed to the style and laws of Castile, with no difference whatsoever' (Siguán 1992: 25).<sup>2</sup> Linguistic unity followed the political and cultural hegemony of Castile, with the RAE faithfully serving this goal. Also in the eighteenth century, Charles III made Spanish the official language of public administration and education throughout the Kingdom (Siguán 1992: 28), a policy which further consolidated the sense of 'Spanish-ness'.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the American colonies fought for their independence and all became republics. Spain lost the last of these wars in 1898 and with the loss of imperial wealth – not to mention the demise of its former imperial glory – Spain faced great economic, political and cultural difficulties. A group of intellectuals at the time (the Generation of '98) debated the state of the nation and its identity crisis (see Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2002a). These men regarded 'Castilian' and 'Spanish' as synonymous, saw this as the only valid national language, and regarded cultural and linguistic unification as the only way to national progress, even though several (e.g. Unamuno, Baroja) were native speakers of non-Castilian languages.

Thus as Spain entered the 1900s, ideologies of linguistic unification and standardization had existed for several centuries. The '98 Generation's expected revival of Spanish greatness did not materialize: political upheaval and economic



strife gripped Spain until after the Civil War. The subsequent dictatorship under General Franco resulted in almost 40 years of Castilian hegemony, strong state centralization, and repressive measures towards regional communities, identities and languages. Relegated to private use only, these languages lost much of the confidence they had built up during the cultural renaissances of the 1800s. With the return to democracy after Franco's death in 1975, the transition period was bolstered by the 1978 Constitution which took a leap towards acceptance of – and support for – the multilingualism present in various Spanish regions, mainly Catalonia, the Basque country and Galicia. The status and rights accorded in the Constitution to these minority languages of Spain had not been enjoyed since the Second Republic (1931–6). That said, Castilian maintained its hegemonic position over all other languages as the 'official Spanish language of State' because the use and promotion of the other languages are restricted to their respective regions, and only to the extent that regional statutes provide for. In modern-day Spain, language debates which address questions about the importance, use and current state of its languages are commonplace occurring in a number of domains that Cameron (1995) anticipates are common to any country: the general public, the political realm, literary circles and the media. One of the 'craft professionals' engaged pre-eminently in such debates is the RAE whose contributions to – and leadership of – the debates, particularly in the media, will serve to exemplify the issues of ideology, institutions and media discourse that are core to this book.

### **Spanish in the world**

While this book necessarily takes as its starting point the development of language in Spain, and focuses on the debates emanating from the Spanish media, any discussion of the Spanish language and the role of the RAE must acknowledge the fact that the vast majority of native speakers live outside of the language's historical birthplace on the Iberian peninsula. Recent estimates put the total number of Spanish-speakers today at somewhere between 360 million (Moreno Fernández and Otero 2008) and 500 million (Molina, *El Mundo* 26 April 2007). With just 40 million of these being residents of Spain, the remainder are found in Spain's former American and Caribbean colonies, as well as in the United States and a few thousand speakers still in the Philippines (SIL International 2005). With the arrival in the fifteenth century of the Spanish *conquistadores* first in the Caribbean and then on the mainland American continent, the Castilian language became – as Nebrija indicated – the language of empire through its inevitable

role in trading, administration and legal transactions as the American colonies took root. A certain amount of importance was initially given to the native languages of indigenous civilizations that the colonizers encountered there, and these indigenous languages were the vehicles through which the Christianizing objectives of the Spaniards, as well as the recruitment of native community chiefs to assist the colonizers in their administrative duties, were both achieved (Mar-Molinero 2000a: 29). Eventually, however, the need for a more effective system of communication over the enormous area that the Spanish American Empire covered with its four vice-royalties, and the desire for inhabitants of the colonies to live under Spanish values, meant that the language of the empire was imposed throughout. Charles III's eighteenth-century decree on Spanish as an official language applied to the colonies as well as Spain, so all activities in churches, education and public administration had to be carried out in Spanish.

Once the various vice-royalties began to break up into independent republics in the early part of the nineteenth century, Spanish remained as the official language in each of these states in order to allow and encourage a sense of unity and civic participation in the new democracies. As part of this 'one nation, one language' Herderian ideal, education in the national language was seen as a means to create and spread the values of the emergent nation-states and to unify people in the nation-building projects. The 'Castilian Grammar intended for use by Americans' (*Gramática de la lengua castellana destinada al uso de los americanos*) was published by Andrés Bello in 1847 and marked a key moment in the definition of the characteristics which shaped many aspects of American Spanish, and which set it apart from the former colonial language variety. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, each of the established Spanish-speaking American republics began to create their own national language academies,<sup>3</sup> beginning with Colombia in 1871 and continuing well into the twentieth century, with the most recent, the North American Academy of the Spanish Language (*Academia norteamericana de la lengua española*) opening in 1973. The earliest efforts to standardize Spanish promoted the central peninsular spoken variety which consequently became the model for written language, including in the Americas for the purposes of conquest. The Academies' roles in the development of prestigious national 'standards' in Latin America were mixed – some contested the hegemony of the Madrid Academy and sought to strengthen their national variety of Spanish, while others argued that while politically independent from Spain, there was still much to be gained from linguistic unity with it. Arguably, however, the prestige of the peninsular 'standard' endured and became the plumb-line against which variation – or deviation as it was generally considered – was

measured. In time, however, the post-colonial formation of national identity – and the important role of language variety within this – allowed American Spanish varieties to flourish and gain a degree of prestige. More on the development of Spanish as a language with pluricentric standards can be found in Thompson (1992), Mar-Molinero (2000b) and Torrent-Lenzen (2006). This study will more fully analyse the Academy's reaction to pluricentric standards in particular in Chapter 6. More will also be said about the relationship between Madrid and what it sees as its 'sister academies' (*academias hermanas*) (Real Academia Española 1999: xiii) in my later discussion of the data in Chapters 5 and 6. Suffice it to say here that debates concerning the supposed 'centre' of the language versus the 'periphery' have been persistent since that foundational period.

Today, Spanish is the official language of 21 states as well as being an official language of the European Union, United Nations, World Trade Organization, the NAFTA and Mercosur free trade blocs,<sup>4</sup> not to mention a number of other regional co-operation networks in the Americas and Africa.<sup>5</sup> In addition to these government and commercial domains, factors such as increased migration, technology, film, literature and other cultural forms are some of the important aspects of globalization processes which are having considerable impact on the international profile of Spanish (see Díaz-Campos 2011, García 2008, Mar-Molinero 2010, Mar-Molinero and Stewart 2006, Marcos Marín 2006). Of particular interest to the growing and evermore diverse demography of the Spanish-speaking world are the situations in the United States and Brazil. In the former, this is due to the growth of Hispanics/Latinos as an ethnolinguistic group and the largest immigrant community in the United States (made up of first, second and third generation immigrants). The vast majority of these are bilingual English–Spanish, although intergenerational transmission of Spanish is very low (Mar-Molinero 2000b: 178) and has led to programmes to promote Spanish as a 'heritage language'. In recent years in Brazil, the strategic importance of the Mercosur trading bloc and a law establishing Spanish as a compulsory subject in secondary education have both been leading to an increased requirement for Spanish language business people, teachers and educational materials (see Del Valle and Villa 2006). These individual nation-states, as well as the aforementioned trading blocs and political unions where Spanish is official, represent fascinating contexts in which the Spanish language is becoming coupled to economies which are as strong as – if not stronger than – Spain, particularly in the current context of the global economic slowdown which has hit Spain particularly harshly. The strength of these economies like the United States and Mexico, or emerging players on the world market such as Chile and Brazil, may

very well correlate with a shifting away from Spain's linguistic dominance over the Spanish language.

## The structure of the book

Following my introductory comments on the main concept of standardization that frames this study of media discourse, this introductory chapter provided an overview of the Spanish-speaking world for readers who are less familiar with it. Moving on to Chapter 1, I synthesize the main arguments and definitions regarding language ideologies, not necessarily to provide an exhaustive account of the literature, nor a 'whistle-stop tour', but rather to outline how I intend to specifically draw on the concepts of this relatively new field of research, and use these to think about and 'capture' the ideas and attitudes present in discourse about Spanish in my later case study. These definitions will highlight how language ideologies are constructed on the basis of the dialectical relationship between linguistic, socio-political and historical factors which provide the context for such debates. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will provide me with the principal analytical toolkit that will be employed in the data analysis later in the study, and so an introduction to this approach to linguistic and social analysis will be given. The chapter then goes on to show how the concepts of language ideology and CDA intersect and provide a useful approach to the sociolinguistic investigation of discourse. Towards the end of the chapter, consideration is given to media discourse involving Spain's principal linguistic authorities, and how their institutional ideologies about language are embedded in the press. Specifically, I explain the choice of two key media publications – *ABC* and *El País* – which provide the empirical data for this book's study.

Chapter 2 builds on the framework of language ideologies set out in the previous chapter by focusing on language authorities and their role in standardization situating the emergence of this specific ideology in its socio-historical context. The chapter supports Milroy and Milroy's view (1999) that standardization is best considered as an ideology rather than simply a set of actual activities or practices. I show how this framework has underpinned efforts to establish and maintain a 'common' language in nation-state contexts for a number of centuries, and how standardization efforts depend on the existence of institutions which not only promote the ideology of a correct, standard language variety, but which either take, or are given, responsibility for providing that standardized version of a language which is seen as prestigious. The discussion narrows from the

general discussion of institutions to the specific role of language academies as standardizing institutions and the RAE in particular. Beginning with a brief history of this crucial organization, I show how its various publications (which now span almost 300 years) are firmly embedded in processes of standardization, but that the RAE is not alone in its efforts to suggest improvements to the Spanish language – there are a variety of other organizations and products which seek the same ends as the Academy, and frequently do so in close collaboration with the RAE, and so some attention is given to these associated institutions. The chapter ends by considering the important domain of media (other than the press), and reiterates that the powerful position occupied by the media in contemporary Western societies makes this a particularly interesting vehicle of ideological transmission and a fruitful domain for study.

Chapter 3 is the first of three chapters centred on the data taken from the Spanish press, and looks first at the concept of the unity of Spanish across the world, and the sense of community that the RAE claims to exist among its speakers. Attention is turned to an analysis of media discourse in order to begin uncovering the particular ways in which the RAE – as well as other language guardians – defines the Spanish language in public debates. It offers a critical analysis of media discourse that draws on the common bonds of the language in ideological debates surrounding 'standard Spanish'. It focuses on the referential strategies employed by language ideological agents to name and describe Spanish demonstrating how this is important because such strategies contribute to the achievement of particular social, political or psychological aims: in this case, the acceptance of Spanish as being a unified, common language. Following discussion of how Spanish is named, conceived, defined and referred to, the chapter discusses how language guardians control these definitions in an effort to control the language itself. The chapter then considers how Spanish-speakers around the world are designated, and how the concept of a 'community' is constructed and reinforced by discursive strategies. Lexical choices and processes of mystification or naturalization by linguistic means are examined in terms of their link to overarching ideological objectives.

Chapter 4 discusses the role and authority of the RAE and other language guardians as this is established in the press. I consider what a critical reading of Spanish media discourse and key policy documents of the relevant authoritative institutions tells us about first the role of language authorities in producing and maintaining a 'standard' variety of Spanish; and secondly, the precise means by which the RAE legitimizes its role and authority in the process of standardization. This chapter will consider the language guardians' activities insofar as these

are announced and publicized in the press, as well as their public reflections on what they do and what they are perceived to be doing by the media other commentators. While the focus is largely on the RAE, some of the analysis and reflection considers the practices of other selected language guardians. The chapter also draws links between these selected other guardians and the collaborative practices and relationship with the RAE. It goes on to consider discourse authored by the RAE in which their activities and their authority to carry these out are explained, justified or defended, and demonstrates how the content and form of the language they use work together to create strategies of legitimization. The evaluations of other institutions are considered, as is the way that intertextual references reinforce or contest the discourse of the RAE. Throughout the chapter, I draw on CDA of the press discourse which, as has been argued throughout the book thus far, is the most public and most widespread medium through which the RAE is able to make its ideas and activities known to Spanish-speakers and the wider public.

Chapter 5, the final data chapter, is concerned with the Spanish language in the world as I consider how the RAE frames discussions of the language – its shape, value and frailties – in relation to the global context. The chapter identifies and explains the discursive strategies employed by the RAE to talk about global Spanish and its role, reach and importance around the world. The chapter then looks at issues relating to the representation of Spanish as a pluricentric language and how these various norms are considered, as well as how this acknowledgement of numerous prestigious norms squares with the driving argument about a single, unified language. The discussion goes on to analyse the policy response to various challenges to international standardization which has materialized in the form of the Panhispanic Language Policy (*Política lingüística panhispanica*, PLP). This chapter considers the notion of the supposed ‘ownership’ of Spanish, before ending with an analysis of the various potential scales of ‘belonging’ – local, national and global – and the discursive and metaphorical references made to these in language debates in media discourse.

The concluding chapter of this book is where I draw together the various strands of the discussion and draw conclusions first about the ideological framework which gives rise to the concept of ‘standard’ Spanish, and what this means in a contemporary context. Further conclusions are then drawn on what media discourse shows us about the discursive construction of standard Spanish and the impact of such discursive practices on issues to do with language authorities, institutions of various kinds and the management of the Spanish language on the global scale in which it now operates.

## Notes

- 1 El español vive uno de los mejores momentos de su historia, lo hablan más de 440 millones de personas y es idioma oficial en 21 países, asentándose además en Estados Unidos y Brasil. Expertos, académicos y gobernantes han tomado conciencia del valor cultural y económico que tiene como lengua y de la rentabilidad social que le puede sacar en el mundo de habla hispana.
- 2 'trabaje y piense con consejo maduro y secreto por reducir estos reinos de que se compone España al estilo y leyes de Castilla sin ninguna diferencia.'
- 3 The Academies in chronological order of establishment are Colombia (1871), Ecuador (1874), Mexico (1875), El Salvador (1876), Venezuela (1883), Chile (1885), Peru (1887), Guatemala (1887), Costa Rica (1923), Philippines (1924), Panama (1926), Cuba (1926), Paraguay (1927), Bolivia (1927), Dominican Republic (1927), Nicaragua (1928), Argentina (1931), Uruguay (1943), Honduras (1948), Puerto Rico (1955) and the United States (1973) (from ASALE 2008).
- 4 NAFTA is the North American Free Trade Agreement which created a trade bloc in 1994 between Canada, the United States of America and Mexico ([www.nafta-sec-alena.org](http://www.nafta-sec-alena.org)). Mercosur (or *Common Southern Market*) is the customs union agreement signed between Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay, with associate member countries throughout South America ([www.mercosur.int](http://www.mercosur.int)).
- 5 These include the Organization of American States, the Organization of Ibero-American States, the Central American Integration System, Union of South American Nations, the Andean Community of Nations, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Antarctic Treaty, the Latin Union and the African Union.

# Language Ideologies, Critical Discourse Analysis and Media Discourse

## Introduction

This chapter establishes the core theoretical and analytical concepts on which my study of language ideologies and global Spanish will rest. Beginning with language ideologies, I will consider how scholars have sought to define and conceptualize ‘ideology’ itself, and in doing so, to understand the ideological relationships between purely ‘linguistic’ factors of language debates and the socio-political and historical factors which provide the context for them. Following this, I will discuss the main analytical apparatus that I will be using in the study, CDA, showing how this approach to linguistic and social analysis arose from identifying the ideological underpinnings of discourse. I will then explore ways in which the concepts of language ideology and CDA intersect and how both the points of divergence and convergence between them provide us with a useful approach to the sociolinguistic investigation of discourse (see also Blackledge 2005 and Milani 2007 for a similar attempt to bring together CDA and language ideology). The final part of this conceptual framework focuses on how institutional ideologies are embedded in media discourse and in particular on the pervasive influence in this domain of Spain’s principal authorities on the Spanish language.

## Language ideologies

### **Definitions**

The concept of language ideologies,<sup>1</sup> which is core to everything that follows in this book, has developed over the past few decades from the field of linguistic



anthropology. Scholars in North America such as Bambi Schieffelin, Kathryn Woolard, Paul Kroskrity, Susan Gal and Michael Silverstein (Gal 1993, 1998; Schieffelin et al. 1998; Silverstein 1985, 1996) have led the way in the evolution of language ideological research. The roots of this concept in American linguistic anthropology suggest that, however we define 'language ideology' itself, it cannot be sufficiently regarded as simply a matter of ideas about or attitudes towards language structure alone (Milani and Johnson 2010: 4), nor simply a study of individual responses to language. It must, instead, consider the effects of lived experience on the values placed on language, as ideology is not only personal but also social, born out of responses to social phenomena. Vice versa, prevailing ideological trends and beliefs about language must also be seen as having an effect on social attitudes and behaviour.

In terms of a working definition of language ideology, Woolard argues that:

Representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world are what we mean by 'language ideology'. (1998: 3)

We see here an emphasis on the social basis of human relationships and the languages that we speak and come into contact with. Out of this 'intersection of language and human beings' emerge the experiences and ideas which consequently bring about a set of attitudes regarding the historical role, usefulness, value and quality of a language or language variety in its context. These ideologies can be explicitly debated or implicitly held, which means that researchers cannot always draw on observable, explicit statements which might be clearly identifiable as 'ideological'; they must also dig under the surface of discourse to reveal the more implicitly held ideas about languages that exist individually and collectively.

Language ideology includes 'a vision of the linguistic configuration of a specific community, as well as the reasoning that first, produces that vision, and second, justifies its value' (Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2002c: 11), and so it is important to understand both the 'vision' of which language(s) should be used (or not) and how this position is justified in any given context. Although many languages have historically been valued by their writers, speakers and other commentators as having 'natural' intrinsic qualities of grandeur and splendour, it is more often in situations of contact between (what are perceived as) discrete languages or language varieties that value judgements come to the fore (see Joseph 1987: 30). The sense of identification with one's mother tongue is heightened by the proximity of a different language and its speakers. However, it is rarely a simple preference for one particular linguistic form or

style or structure that leads to competition between languages. The construction of language ideologies comes from ‘converging dimensions’ of lived experience and social/political ideology, and this construction is an important factor in understanding why, on contact, different ideologies lead to conflict. As Woolard highlights, ‘ideologies of language are not about language alone’ (1998: 3) and so it is important to understand the factors that language ideologies *are* about.

### **Social, political and historical factors**

In his overview of the development of language ideology, Kroskrity stresses the multiple social dimensions that interact with language and consequently shape ideologies:

[L]anguage ideologies are profitably conceived as multiple because of the multiplicity of meaningful social divisions . . . within sociocultural groups that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives expressed as indices of group membership. (2000a: 12)

As a result, dimensions such as class, gender, clan, elites and generations inform and influence the worldviews – social, political, linguistic – that social groups develop and construct from their lived experiences. Additional factors such as education, ethnicity, cultural practices and religion constitute further influences on the shaping of a language ideology.

Scholarly interest in this field has sought to identify the particular social practices in which language acquisition, use and development are rooted. This in turn has provoked critical reflection on the nature of how social structures and forms of talk relate (e.g. Cameron 1995, Fairclough 2006, Hodge and Kress 1979). Language as a medium of communication not only carries *functional* meaning, but also *indexes* characteristics and values common to individuals or groups of speakers, such as educational experience, family background, moral instruction, political persuasion and authority structures. Kroskrity highlights this, saying:

Language users’ ideologies bridge their sociocultural experience and their linguistic and discursive resources by constituting those linguistic and discursive forms as indexically tied to features of their sociocultural experience. (2000a: 21)

The relationship between socio-political factors and language ideology is two-way. Not only is it true that our socio-political background is instrumental in shaping language practices; it is also the case that those same background factors

shape our vision of the language(s) employed around us and the values that we attach to those language varieties.

In addition, any analysis of contemporary language attitudes will also necessarily reveal evidence of those aspects of culture and society which are specific to that historical moment. Such analysis will then show how these specificities come to influence how construals of language are forged in that society at that particular time (Woolard 1998: 4). According to Blommaert (1999b), recent academic interrogation has not produced a 'historiography of language ideologies'.<sup>2</sup> In his introduction to *Language Ideological Debates*, he frames the later empirical chapters with a call to adopt a methodology in language ideology research which will better take into account the human and historical context in which ideologies arise. He goes on to explain:

They [language ideological debates] develop against a wider socio-political and historical horizon of relationships of power, forms of discrimination, social engineering, nation building and so forth. Their outcome always has connections with these issues as well: the outcome of a debate directly or indirectly involves forms of conflict and inequality among groups of speakers: restrictions on the use of certain languages/varieties, the loss of social opportunities when these restrictions are not observed by speakers, the negative stigmatization of certain languages/varieties, associative labels attached to languages/varieties. Language ideological debates are part of more general socio-political processes. (Blommaert 1999: 2)

In summary, the social, political and historical factors which contribute to the construction of language ideology mean that it is 'derived from, rooted in, reflective of, or responsive to the experience or interests of a particular social position' (Woolard 1998: 6). Far from being a purely cognitive activity, language ideology is formed by the interplay of social realities of people living in real communities and responding to their perceptions of actual, lived situations.

### **Locus of ideology reproduction**

Given the aim of this book to account for the linguistic ideologies relating to the definition and global spread of Spanish, the question of where to find evidence of the discursive practices in which such ideologies might be constructed, reconstructed, reproduced and disseminated is important. In pursuit of a locus or 'siting' of ideology, Woolard suggests three likely contexts (1998: 9–11): (1) linguistic practices, (2) explicit metalinguistic discourse and

(3) implicit metapragmatics. *Linguistic practices* inform and shape ideology by reifying the status quo through repetition and naturalization, justifying existing linguistic configurations. Examples include the choice of which language to use in bilingual contexts (e.g. Castilian or Catalan in Catalonia), or selection of an 'appropriate' register in a given sociosituational context (Holmes 1992). In explicit *metalinguistic discourse*, there is explicit discussion, evaluation and planning about how speakers both *use* language and *ought* to use it. It is, in effect, 'talk about talk', and frequently (though not exclusively) takes place within circles of so-called experts through verbal or printed language ideological debates (Blommaert 1999c). With echoes of Anderson's 'print capitalism' (1983) and its role in nation-building ideology and discourse, Blommaert argues that language ideology successfully spreads through first entextualizing the debate.

Entextualization refers to the process by means of which discourses are successively or simultaneously decontextualized and metadiscursively recontextualized, so that they become a new discourse associated to a new context and accompanied by a particular metadiscourse which provides a sort of 'preferred reading' for the discourse. (Blommaert 2005: 47)

Through acceptance as a canon of language ideology, descriptive and prescriptive texts then become cornerstones of language definition and usage, the 'locus of ideology (re)production' within the respective language communities from which these texts emerge (Blommaert 1999b: 10, see also Fairclough 2001). The third site of language ideology that Woolard suggests is *implicit metapragmatics*, strategies which she goes on to define as 'linguistic signalling that is part of the stream of language use in process and that simultaneously indicates how to interpret that language-in-use' (1998: 9). It could be argued that this siting is where language users employ linguistic strategies (e.g. questions, interruptions, (im)politeness) or what Gumperz refers to as 'contextualization cues' that signal contextual presuppositions (Gumperz 1982: 131) and serve to reinforce (a)symmetrical social relations and their corresponding forms of talk.

Language ideologies which reflect asymmetrical social relations occur frequently in institutional discourse (e.g. police interrogations, medical consultations) where assumptions about the relative authority, roles and rights of different interlocutors within spoken discourse are well established (Fairclough 2001, Thornborrow 2002). Such 'guidance' is rarely written down, unlike the metalinguistic discourse of media style guides, for example. Rather, implicit ideological strategies are revealed through a critical analysis of linguistic markers and the discourse context. From what we have discussed so far, it

should be clear that locating ideology gives rise to various 'tensions' (Woolard 1998: 6). In the numerous possible ideological loci discussed above, we might observe explicit or implicit evidence of a dominant or subverted ideology, held by individuals or institutions that may or may not be consciously aware of their underlying ideologies and practices. It is therefore critical that we contextualize the construction of language ideologies and account for the historical, political, social and other factors which form, condition and perpetuate these beliefs and practices, as we shall be doing in Chapters 3–5. Equally critical is an acknowledgement of how particular agencies and actors are involved in metalinguistic discourse.

### **Agency and ideology**

It is now axiomatic that all living languages vary and change (e.g. Lippi-Green 1997) due to as many variables as affect the development of ideology as discussed above in 'Social, historical and political factors'. However, a language has no organic 'life' of its own apart from the constantly changing spoken and written practices of its users (Silverstein 1985), which keep it alive. Changing habits transform language; whereas standardization, education and literacy consolidate and perpetuate its current and emerging forms. The decisions of individuals and groups of speakers are therefore the catalysts of linguistic survival or demise, which raises the important question of agency in shaping and proliferating language ideology, that is, who influences or controls public conceptions and ideologies of language in society?

As I noted above, Lippi-Green comments on the scarcity of debate about language standardization (Lippi-Green 1997: 6, see also Blommaert 1999c, Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2002a, Gal and Woolard 2001). In this book, I seek to build on Lippi-Green's contribution to redressing that balance so that we shift our perception of the sources of ideology from very general societal movements to more specific 'ideological brokers' who might include 'politicians and policy-makers, interest groups, academicians, policy implementers, the organized polity, individual citizens' (Blommaert 1999b: 9). In the Spanish context – as in many others – these powerful groups of experts and language ideologues tend to become 'institutions' of the nation-state, loci where ideologies are developed, anchored and disseminated through institutional activities. They become in effect 'social reproduction systems' (Blommaert 1999b: 10) whose activities and publications then serve as 'social sources of authority for diverse definitions of language phenomena' (Gal and Woolard 2001: 10). In my own British context,

the Oxford range of English Dictionaries would certainly hold this position of linguistic authority with language learners and native speakers alike turning to their pages for clarification of 'correct' form. Similarly, many ideological brokers would have us look to the likes of teachers, clergy, politicians and BBC newsreaders for 'correct' pronunciation of British English. However, such ideologies can be challenged and embedded practices can change, and more recent developments in regional television have introduced presenters with distinct regional accents, promoting the stance (and its underlying ideology) that public communication need not always be in the prestigious 'Queen's English' accent, and conveying a message of inclusion and value of non-standard varieties.

### **Institutions and 'publics'**

If we accept that language is a socio-cultural and indeed political resource, then analysing the development of language ideologies and practices should constitute:

a story of different, conflicting, disharmonious practices *performed by identifiable actors, in very specific ways, and by means of very specific instruments*. Crucial evolutions in the history of languages have to be located in 'real' space and time, that is, in socioculturally and politically molded space and time. (Blommaert 1999a: 426, my emphasis)

Pinning down agency for the production of particular language ideologies may not be an easy task, but it is a necessary one due to the process of 'naturalization' in which 'discourse types actually appear to *lose* their ideological character' (Fairclough 2001: 76). The construction of 'common-sense' arguments surrounding particular language ideologies – achieved through naturalization, which renders them somehow 'non-ideological' – does not, however, stop at the level of the institution. On the contrary, social institutions promulgate naturalized linguistic ideologies in a way that associates ideology with a perceived wider public reality or status quo, which is then accepted as 'common sense'. Gal and Woolard highlight that:

publics derive their authority from being in a sense anonymous . . . They supposedly or potentially include everyone but abstract from each person's interest-bearing and privately defined characteristics. By this reasoning, publics can represent everyone because they are no-one-in-particular. (2001: 6)

Such veiling behind the anonymous 'public' has often made it difficult to identify ideology brokers, but it remains a crucial task to understand how language practices and wider social processes are constructed by particular individuals and institutions whose views on language are 'grounded in social experience and often demonstrably tied to [the agent's] political-economic interests' (Kroskrity 2000a: 8). This identification becomes vital when we note that anonymous, widespread ideas do not depend on a defined community of 'language ideologues', but simply on 'the projection or imagination of groups or subjectivities in print or other mass media' (Gal and Woolard 2001: 8). A sense of agency and responsibility is lost by projecting an ideology into the often anonymous realm of print and media, where, as Blommaert describes:

. . . 'things happen': people choose sides, quote and comment, represent, criticize, and they do all this through influential channels that articulate a 'massive' voice – the presumed voice of the masses. (1999b: 16)

The consequence of this fluidity of exchange within the press is that it is highly instrumental in forming, debating and reforming ideological claims and viewpoints. Hence, the case study of this book examines how such debates are played out by the RAE when it engages in press discourse. The role of the Spanish Academy as a major agent in promulgating language ideologies, and the focus on media texts as major loci of these ideological reproductions will be discussed later in this chapter, and in Chapters 3–5. To conduct that analysis of identifying the ideological underpinnings of standardization discourse, it will be necessary to adopt a methodological approach which will allow a critique first of the denoted meaning within the lexical content of discourse, and secondly of the connoted meaning which is encoded in both the lexical and grammatical choices made in the production of texts.

## Critical discourse analysis (CDA)

### **Definition**

Progressing from an analysis of the surface level, denoted meaning of a text to the more embedded, connoted meaning requires more than just a shift from denotation to connotation. It requires an approach that allows the analyst to reveal concealed power relations and ideological position, and, for this, additional tools are needed to enable a critique of the text as not simply a mirror of 'the way things are' but as containing ideological assumptions and implications which

construct a particular representation of the given topic. CDA, for all the potential difficulty in defining a precise method as we shall see, serves as a suitable tool for this objective.

CDA constitutes a set of different approaches with a common strand that links textual analysis to the social context of the production and reception of texts by claiming that a definite and intricate relationship exists between language, power and ideology.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, scholars of CDA state that this interaction of influences – and the social order to which they contribute – should be open to critique because as Fairclough points out, ‘in human matters, interconnections and chains of cause and effect may be distorted out of vision. Hence ‘critique’ is essentially making visible the interconnectedness of things’ (cited in Wodak 2001: 2). Wodak goes on to include this emphasis of critiquing power relationships in the definition of CDA she offers:

CDA may be defined as fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse). (2001: 2)

The focus of CDA is to reveal how language use is structured in order to achieve a position of dominance for particular discourses, and the subjugation of others. Relevant structures are discovered by means of:

a principled and transparent shunting back and forth between the microanalysis of texts using varied tools of linguistics, semiotics, and literary analysis and the macroanalysis of social formations, institutions, and power relations that these texts index and construct. (Luke 2002: 100)

In response to the social problems and inequalities manifested by – and in – both powerful and ‘powerless’ discourse agents in elite and popular texts/discourses, the principled basis of CDA is evidenced in its emancipatory objectives. ‘CDAnalysts’ (a term borrowed from Van Noppen 2004) also seek transparency in that they make no secret of the objectives of this analytical approach, instead adopting a clear position on the side of the ‘underdog,’ or as van Dijk remarks:

CDA research combines . . . ‘solidarity with the oppressed’ with an attitude of opposition and dissent against those who abuse text and talk in order to establish, confirm or legitimate their abuse of power. Unlike much other scholarship, CDA does not deny but explicitly defines and defends its own socio-political position. That is, CDA is biased – and proud of it. (2001b: 96)



The loose alliance of CDAnalysts which has emerged therefore comprises analysts who share these common perspectives and aims, yet with distinct topical focuses. For example, Norman Fairclough combines Systemic Functional Linguistics with a Marxist appraisal of societal/political relations (1992, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2006); Teun van Dijk takes a socio-cognitive approach to studying elite discourse, the media and racism (1985, 1991, 1996); Ruth Wodak comes from an interactional studies background and espouses a discourse–historical perspective to CDA (1989, 1996, Wodak and Chilton 2005, Wodak et al. 1999); and Paul Chilton applies a semiotic and communication studies focus to political discourse (1988, 2004).

An essential and defining feature of CDA is its particular understanding of the term ‘discourse’ itself. Blommaert (who would not be considered a CDAnalyst but who has provided some insightful critiques of CDA) defines it as ‘all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns and developments of use’ (2005: 3). This interrelation of language and society is key, and most (if not all) CDAnalysts follow this Foucaultian view of discourse as social practice: it is language, and other semiotic signals, creating and responding to social practices in a dialectical relationship. The context in which discourse is produced is an essential aspect of this critical analysis, as Fairclough emphasizes:

whenever people speak or listen or write or read, they do so in ways which are determined socially and have social effects. [. . .] Social phenomena are linguistic, on the other hand, in the sense that the language activity which goes on in social contexts . . . is not merely a reflection or expression of social processes and practices, it is a part of those processes and practices. (2001: 19)

Discourse is shaped by structures, but also contributes to shaping and reshaping them, to reproducing and transforming them. (2010: 59)

As a social practice, then, discourse both represents and constitutes the world around us through the use of language or other meaningful semiotic human activity. Definitions are proposed and contested, decisions are made, power is negotiated and exercised, and activities of all kinds are based on the discursive understanding of how society is structured and functions; as Kerr writes, ‘ideology has to be performed socially’ (2003: 135). The discursive ‘performance’ of ideology incorporates processes of conception, production, dispersion, reception and consumption, all of which embrace myriad influences on the resulting discourse. This leads van Dijk to argue that a full or complete discourse

analysis of a text is impossible (2001b: 98–9), but CDAnalysts try to ‘take into account the most relevant textual and contextual factors, including historical ones, that contribute to the production and interpretation of a given text’ (Huckin 2007: 1). Huckin identifies the most salient factors as ‘those features of a text that are most interesting from a critical perspective, those that appear to be textual manipulations serving non-democratic purposes’ (2007: 3). The non-democratic purposes shown in Chapters 3–5 in this book include the discursive construction of the ‘unquestionable’ need for standardization as a response to linguistic globalization, along with the legitimization of this by linguistically structured arguments. Other textual manipulations include the naturalized practice of taking authority for language away from its speakers in order to perform corpus planning and to return it to them as a normative commodity in the form of dictionaries, grammars and orthographies, as well as prestigious public uses of ‘exemplary’ language in the press.

One of the many things that discourse can achieve is the legitimation and naturalization of particular understandings of society. These views become influential by being widely available, dispersed and reproduced through an increasing number of channels. However, the power of dominant discourses rarely comes from people being forced to accept it by coercion, but more often by ‘manufacturing consent’ (Herman and Chomsky 2002) to accept the arguments proposed. For this reason, CDA focuses on language and power in order to reveal the underlying ideologies held by those in power. The term ‘dominant’ discourse does not mean that it is the only one in circulation or power: discourses often exist in competition, particularly in democratic societies. Furthermore, texts are often ‘sites of struggle’ (Wodak 2001: 11) in which various discourses and ideologies can be found vying for dominance. This is why CDAnalysts seek to ‘illuminate ways in which the dominant forces in a society construct versions of reality that favour the interests of those same forces’ (Huckin 2007: 2), which means that a central question of CDA must be ‘who has control of discourse and the media by which it is made public?’

### **CDA as ‘shared perspective’**

Having attempted to outline what CDA is, it is also worth underlining what it is not. Consensus among the network of scholars who have contributed to its development is that CDA is not a fixed methodology or ‘blueprint’ applicable to any object of textual analysis. According to Wodak and Meyer, ‘CDA has never been and has never attempted to be or to provide one single or specific theory’, and

hence 'studies in CDA are multifarious, derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds, oriented towards different data and methodologies' (Wodak and Meyer 2009: 5). Instead, it is at its most basic level a shared 'perspective on doing scholarship: it is, so to speak, discourse analysis "with an attitude"' (van Dijk 2001b: 96). The supposed 'attitude' taken by analysts has much to do with the socio-political stance of CDA proponents: their starting point is the belief that there are prevailing social problems which are on the one hand evidenced through public discourse, but which on the other hand are also influenced by this discourse. There are therefore a number of textual features which can be analysed, and this analysis provides a way of linking the 'micro' level of the text with the 'macro' level of the society whose overarching values are reproduced within the text (Luke 2002: 100, van Dijk 2001a: 354). For this reason, textual features (as outlined below in my overview of the three main approaches) are of interest to CDAnalysts, which has resulted in some more or less systematic approaches to identifying and analysing such features, and while these do not necessarily make a set 'tick list' of questions which are asked rigidly of every text, they do provide a useful framework for the initial linguistic analysis (before proceeding to the social analysis).

In order to reveal what Cameron calls the 'hidden agendas' (2001: 123–41) and manifestations of power relations that can be embedded in texts, there are three main approaches which have been highly influential in the development of CDA, and which are the most relevant to the study undertaken in this book: Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach, Fairclough's social–discursive approach and Wodak's discourse–historical approach. Van Dijk suggests a socio-cognitive approach, in which he first analyses the *topics* as expressed in titles, headlines, summaries, abstracts, thematic sentences or conclusions (2001b: 102). Text producers foreground certain meanings or aspects of discourse, making them appear more important or urgent than other aspects. Next, *local meanings* demonstrate how authors select their terms and how these invest entities, events or ideas with explicit and implicit meanings through implications, presuppositions, allusions, vagueness and other textual strategies. The *context models* relate discourse structures to the structures of *local and global contexts* (2001b: 108). The local context refers to the domain, action and participants of a text, as well as their intentions, objectives and discernable ideologies. The global context identifies the overarching structures created by political, societal, historical, economic and cultural influences. These are particularly important as 'they often form the ultimate explanatory and critical rationale of discourse and its analysis' (2001b: 108). Finally, in van Dijk's *event models*, text producers and consumers use contextually relevant dimensions of

discourse (setting, participants, etc.) to construct or interpret the event according to 'socially shared mental representations' (1993: 257) which play a part in the interpretation of events.

Another influential procedure for unearthing the hidden agendas in discourse is proposed by Fairclough (2001), sometimes considered to be the 'father' of CDA due to his early and significant role in shaping the discipline. Fairclough takes a three-dimensional approach to analysis based on the text, discursive practice and social practice. This leads to three stages of studying a text and its context. First, there is the *description*, which draws heavily on Systemic Functional Linguistics to consider the values embedded in vocabulary, grammar and structure. At this initial stage, ideologically contested lexical choices, classification schemes, formality, euphemism, and semantic relations such as synonymy/antonymy are detailed. Of interest, too, are grammatical processes, nominalizations, passive structures, modes, pronoun use and connections at sentence level, as well as the overall textual structure and how contributions are controlled within the discourse. The second stage of *interpretation* asks what contextual resources readers bring to the process of interpretation, and what discourse types are being drawn upon. The final stage is *explanation*, which aims to make explicit the power relations, ideologies and effects of the discourse in question.

In the third major approach to CDA, Wodak focuses on the historical construction of key aspects of discourse and her particular methodological approach emphasizes three dimensions of analysis: (1) contents, (2) strategies and (3) means and forms of realization (Wodak et al. 1999: 30–47). First, the analysis of content focuses on the construction of themes within discourse. Secondly, strategies represent the discursive schemes 'adopted to achieve a certain political, psychological or other kind of objective' (1999: 31). The strategy of a text (and its producer) might be to construct, dismantle or justify a certain position, or to transform its perceived definition. A particularly useful feature of Wodak's approach here are *topoi*, which are defined as 'conventionalized parts of argumentation which . . . take the form either of explicit or inferable premises . . . or 'conclusion rules' which connect an argument or arguments with a conclusion, a claim' (Wodak et al. 1999: 34). In other words, *topoi* provide the basis upon which the reader should come to a given conclusion. *Topoi* arise from the data analysis and are not 'a priori', even if previous studies provide a useful starting list. The third analytical dimension – the means of realization – provides the detailed study of linguistic categories and devices on which themes, strategies and *topoi* are established.

While there is much in common between the three major strands of CDA outlined here, there are also potential tensions in the epistemological positions of

each. These tensions largely occur in how each theorist conceives of the site where the meaning of a discourse is 'created'. From a Marxist perspective, Fairclough sees discourse as text, interaction and context (2001: 21). Texts become meaningful through the dialectical interactions of interpersonal, social relationships, and those interactions are shaped by the prevailing social conditions and structures. The meaning of discourse is therefore corporately created. For van Dijk, however, cognition is where the meaning of discourse is located and can be analysed. The powerful effects of ideological discourse are formed internally within the mental structures of the individual person, expressed and reinforced in their personal and social cognitive frameworks, and influenced by external factors; hence van Dijk proposes the discourse–cognition–society triangle as the locus of study in order to locate where discourse produces meaning. Finally, Wodak finds that the meaning of discourse is expressed – and takes on its effectiveness – in the historical evolution and reproduction of that discourse. That is to say that representations of reality become naturalized and authoritative with the passage of time, and so Wodak espouses a diachronic approach to discourse analysis in order to reveal the historical development of meaning, rather than looking for a purely 'present' sense of meaning created via interaction. Although these positions could potentially be perceived as incompatible, I rather see the relationship between them as frictional at worst, and in some way complementary at best. The potential complementarity of these approaches to deciphering meaning in discourse can, in my view, prove useful if CDAnalysts are to be 'pulled' by the tensions to seek a close approximation to the variety of meanings – cognitive, social and historical – with which discourses are inevitably endowed.

### **Method for this study**

Although Meyer notes that 'a definitive list of the linguistic devices relevant for CDA cannot be given, since their selection mainly depends on the specific research questions' (2001: 25), the various approaches sketched above provide details of which textual features are likely to be of interest in attempting to uncover hidden agendas of the data (Cameron 2001) and analyse the language ideological debates around the work of the RAE. Given that the overarching aim of this study is to investigate and demonstrate how language ideologies work in the particular context of Spain's media discourse, the means of achieving this aim will be to identify themes which occur and reoccur across the corpus of data and to investigate how various salient textual features work ideologically. To this end, the synthesis that follows will note the most relevant aspects of textual

and contextual analysis taken from the three approaches above, and will provide some clarity regarding which specific notions from CDA will be applied to the case studies in this book.

The first stage of data analysis focuses on the content, the starting place for all three approaches but referred to as topics/description/contents respectively. This is largely a descriptive exercise to signal that explicit themes (Wodak)/topics (van Dijk) recur, through surface-level features such as focus, subjects, objects and other features which provide a preliminary comprehension of the text. Fairclough's questions from his 'description' stage (equating to Wodak's 'means of realization') allow for a subsequent deeper account of the text, scratching beneath the surface level to understand how the topics, hidden agendas and purposes are linguistically constituted. The linguistic features I will therefore be investigating include lexical choices (classifications, collocations, ideologically significant/contested terms, connotative vs denotative meaning, metaphors, metonyms, synonyms), as well as grammatical choices (agency, nominalization, active vs passive constructions, modality, deixis).

The second stage, then, involves analysing the 'hidden agendas' of the text. Of interest here is the way that texts are produced with both explicit meaning (from the first stage of analysis) and also implicit meanings, which requires a more detailed analysis of the text within its contexts of production and consumption. Van Dijk's concept of 'local meaning' is useful at this point in the analysis, and links in with Wodak's notion of 'strategies' which represent 'a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discourse practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim' (Reisigl and Wodak 2001: 44). The strategies that these authors outline are *referential strategies* (how individuals, concepts or processes are referred to linguistically), *predicational strategies* (what traits and qualities are attributed to them), *argumentation strategies* (what argumentation schemes or 'topoi' are used to justify claims) and *framing strategies* (from what perspective is the subject discussed). While all four strategies will be considered in this analysis, 'topoi'/argumentation strategies are a particularly relevant tool for deducing how the text producers intend the text to be understood, what the desired effects of the text are, and what the basis is of language-related (and other) themes which are developed in the texts and which occur and reoccur in the Spanish Academy's discourse, chiefly in the press. Hence my analysis makes extensive use of this particular notion from Wodak in order to establish how a vision of the Spanish language is constructed, argued and naturalized by discursive means across the corpus of data.

The third stage involves the 'shunting back and forth' (Luke 2002: 100) between the micro- and macroanalysis so that the social, political and other high-level contexts (van Dijk's 'global context') are identified in terms of how unwritten presuppositions influence and determine the indexing and construction of ideological power relations as that takes place within individual texts.

Throughout the application of these flexible methodological proposals, identifying not only the author(s) of the texts but also the agent(s) of the relevant processes is important, and will be an essential consideration at each stage of the analysis in this book. The concept of *agency* is crucial because, in order for certain discourses to secure a position of hegemony, agency can be obscured, meaning that there is seemingly no identifiable individual or institution responsible for producing the discourse. The dominant view, through wide circulation and frequent repetition, then becomes naturalized and received as 'what everyone thinks/says/does', 'common sense' or 'the view from nowhere' (Nagel 1986). Mystification such as this becomes a strategic tool which obscures the source of discourse, putting it beyond scrutiny and its producers beyond responsibility. Consequently, naturalization/mystification also reifies unequal social relations in that there is seemingly no one to be challenged (as 'everyone' thinks that way); therefore CDA affirms the need to uncover the social actors involved and the processes they are enacting, because:

local situations of interaction enact, manifest or instantiate global societal structures. Participants speak and listen as women, mothers, lawyers, party members, or company executives. Their actions, including their discursive actions, realize larger social acts and processes, such as legislation, education, discrimination and dominance, often within institutional frameworks such as parliaments, schools, families, or research institutes. (Van Dijk 2001b: 117)

Elsewhere, van Dijk describes and elaborates on this in terms of 'access', and claims that CDAnalysts must seek to answer the question, 'Who may speak or write to whom, about what, when, and in what context?, or Who may participate in such communicative events in various recipient roles, for instance as addressees, audience, bystanders and overhearers?' (Van Dijk 1996: 86). These are questions to be taken into account in the case study analysis.

### **CDA and metaphor analysis**

Among the many varied and complex discursive practices of language authorities, *metaphor* emerges as a significant and recurring way in which these

authorities refer to the Spanish language. Lakoff defines metaphor as a ‘cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system’, that is, a way of understanding the conventional ‘target domain’ in terms of an unconventional ‘source domain’ (1993). Such mappings across domains are common in everyday language, and most – if not all – of us employ these constructions of language in order to help – or even *make* – us to view things in quite particular and unconventional ways. While many metaphors in everyday language may occur below the level of consciousness, these metaphors still exist as essential ways of structuring language and understanding. The relevance to this study, then, is that how we come to define and conceptualize language (including through the use of conceptual metaphors) has consequences on how we use, value and deal with that language, as well as other languages in their relationship to it.

Metaphors are common not just in personal communication, but also – as this book will show – in institutional discourse. It is therefore interesting to explore how often-powerful institutions use metaphors ideologically to promote particular hidden agendas. Lakoff and Johnson note that ‘people in power get to impose their metaphors’, and further illuminate the strategy at work here when they write that:

In a culture where the myth of objectivism is very much alive and truth is always absolute truth, the people who get to impose their metaphors on the culture get to define what we consider to be true – absolutely and objectively true. (1980: 160)

While metaphor does not serve exclusively as an instrument of power, its capacity to do so, and the manner in which Spanish language authorities employ metaphors to represent truth, are of particular interest to this study. Furthermore, while authoritative discourse has been the subject of critical analysis elsewhere, the issue of how metaphors in particular are used within language ideological debates, and with CDA, remains an embryonic area of study (see Bermel 2007, Chilton 2005 and Hart 2008).

The application of CDA to metaphors will show how they both reflect and serve the positions of powerful institutions. An important reason for claiming that metaphors might be used ideologically is that theorists have shown metaphors to be partial, in both senses of the word. First, they are partial in the sense that they are incomplete, limited, and only explain or foreground certain aspects of the target domain in terms of the source domain. As Lakoff writes, ‘Metaphors are mappings across conceptual domains. Such mappings are asymmetric and



partial' (1993: 245). Second, metaphors are partial in the other sense that they potentially produce a biased understanding of the metaphor's target domain:

[A]ll linguistic classification constructs a representation of experience on the basis of *selective perception* and *selective ignoring* of aspects of the world. (Goatly 1997: 3, my emphases)

It follows that the choice to emphasize or omit particular aspects of – in this case – the linguistic world will obviously contribute to a very specifically constructed view of that world. It also follows that if metaphors have ideological as well as cognitive consequences, then language ideological discourse becomes a very fruitful domain for a critical metaphor analysis in order that we raise awareness of the covert ideologies within. As Goatly suggests, 'the choice of metaphor can have far-reaching ideological as well as cognitive consequences, and . . . we need to raise awareness of these latent ideologies' (1997: 79).

Observations that metaphor analysts share with Critical Discourse Analysts include how language is constructed in order to implicitly achieve certain informative and persuasive objectives in ways other than through reasoned argument. If cognitive theory on the effects of metaphors is correct, then metaphoric usage fulfils quite a different role in creating discourse than overt argument (Bermel 2007: 262). Bermel posits that this is because metaphor 'appeals to innate or deeply embedded ways of understanding and perceiving, and can persuade without reference to argument' (2007: 263). These deeply embedded understandings take us beyond Lakoff's predominantly cognitive framework to see metaphors as social and cultural phenomena. In terms of what metaphors achieve in society, Nerlich et al. argue that 'metaphors are not only cognitive but social and cultural phenomena. They tap into a nation's cultural imagination, they naturalise social representations and they shape social policy' (Nerlich et al. 2002). Accordingly, where metaphors appear as part of the CDA of Spanish language ideological discourse in this study, my aim will be to link the use of metaphor to particular social representations with their corresponding influence on social and linguistic policy.

### Using CDA to study language ideologies: Examining the intersections

Over the past ten years or so, an increasing number of scholars have begun to combine the theoretical framework of language ideologies and the analytical

framework of CDA, using the latter as a useful and appropriate way of investigating the former. This has happened almost in spite of the fact that each field has arisen and developed in quite separate academic and geographical contexts, with the consequence of having points of difference (Milani and Johnson 2008); and yet on the other hand, many scholars have shown through their work that these two distinct theories work well together due to various intersections and points of convergence (Blommaert 2005, De Los Heros 2009, Georgiou 2010, Johnson and Ensslin 2007, Milani 2007, Milani and Johnson 2008, Paffey 2007, 2010). At the most basic level, there is a shared assumption about the constitutive power of language to function as far more than a system of communication and identity. Language is perceived by proponents of both CDA and language ideologies as a vehicle for the enactment of social power, persuasion and the control of access to elite discourses and to the powerful contexts in which these take place. A number of other common factors mean that the combination of CDA and language ideologies is appropriate for this study.

### **Hidden agendas**

The focus of this book is the ideological representation of language by the RAE and other linguistic authorities in the press, and so Fairclough's and Wodak's 'paradigms' provide useful sets of questions with which to draw out ideological features, themes and strategies from case studies. The primary reason for choosing CDA as a guiding analytical procedure is that its aim to uncover hidden institutional ideological agendas is shared explicitly by researchers addressing language ideologies (see, among numerous other studies, Blommaert 1999c, Kroskrity 2000b, Ricento 2000b, Schieffelin et al. 1998).

While not all scholars in the field of language ideologies employ CDA, nor ally themselves with it as an approach, their analytical work is necessarily 'critical' in the sense that it uncovers assumptions and beliefs which lie below the level of naturalized, mystified discourse. Indeed, the argument could be made that there are numerous scholars doing 'critical discourse analysis' (lowercase) without particularly identifying or engaging with the world of 'Critical Discourse Analysis' (uppercase) as outlined above.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, the aims of both CDA and scholarship on language ideologies intersect, as Wodak confirms when she writes that, 'One of the aims of CDA is to "demystify" discourses by deciphering ideologies' (2001: 10).

## **Ideological vocabulary**

As already stated, ideology is shaped, individually and collectively, by attitudes regarding the historical role, usefulness, value and quality of a language or language variety. Van Dijk's view is that, 'since people acquire, express and reproduce their ideologies largely by text or talk, a discourse analytical study of ideology is most relevant' (2006: 115) in order to reveal the constitutive linguistic elements that contribute to the development of ideology in individuals or groups/societies. The analytical questions that Fairclough (2001) asks of a text at the description stage seek to identify these pivotal vocabulary choices, and reveal how these choices reflect the pretext (the contextual factors and ideologies) that informs a text producer at the moment of production. Consequently, guidelines taken from CDA inform this analysis through well-structured and specific questions of texts: for example, are there certain experiential, expressive or relational values attached to or manifested through lexical items? And what evidence is there within these terms of the way that language itself – its history, and its perceived usefulness, value or quality – is being defined or reconstructed as part of ideological discourse?

## **Naturalization**

A critical approach to the media texts being analysed should also reveal ways in which certain language ideologies become naturalized through phrases or terms which are repeated across a range/series of texts that constitute the evolving discourse. Of interest, too, will be the concepts and claims of language guardians, which become mystified through obscuring key people (subjects, objects) and processes identified in the texts. The process of naturalization of a particular discourse obscures the ability of many text 'consumers' to recognize the interest-laden nature of the topic, or certainly the interest-laden way in which it is presented and discussed. As a result, naturalized discourses/positions become 'common-sense' views which often fail to trigger a particularly critical response, while all the time the underlying ideology 'creates and acts in a social world while it masquerades as a description of that world' (Eagleton 1991: 19). In critically analysing data in the following chapters, I will draw attention to words or phrases which frequently recur in language debates in order to determine whether the acceptance and meaning of these terms are undergoing a process of naturalization through repeated use and promotion. Subsequent contextualization of these terms and texts will allow – at the stages of interpretation and explanation – for

suggestions regarding the potential effects of their use by both the Academy members and the journalists reporting on language matters.

### **Sites of ideology**

Research on language ideologies and the approach of CDA both address the sites in which ideological discourse is situated. Viewing discourse through the lens of Woolard's discussion of ideological 'siting' (1998: 9–11), linguistic practices – in multilingual and multivarietal situations at least – include the choice of language variety used to speak or write, as well as textual factors such as register and genre. CDAnalysts take choices at a language variety level to be an important aspect of analysis, as well as the more microlevel lexical choices made vis-à-vis register, semantics, and so on. Furthermore, the metapragmatic analysis of discourse – a central aspect of language ideological debates – will reveal both explicit content and also implicit meaning and strategies in discourse. In other words, where RAE discourse in the press includes declarations which define the Spanish language, its speakers, guardians, status, use and abuse, this is interesting to a critical analysis because the very presence of such debates as revealed in a pragmatic analysis of the text can tell us something about the ideological and discursive practices present in the immediate textual context (Fairclough 1995a: 71) as well as the wider socio-political context in which these debates are found. Furthermore, a critical reading of the content and also the grammatical and structural features of language debates will reveal specific details of the underlying ideologies and the common strategies employed in order to present and proliferate these ideologies through mass media.

### **CDA and hegemony**

CDA helps us to understand where language is being used in the construction of hegemonic linguistic ideologies. It is recognized that language debates are rarely about language alone (Woolard 1998: 3) and that when they do occur, they have much to do with the social changes involved in reorganizing cultural hegemony over the polity (Gramsci 1985: 183–4). Where this reorganization takes the form of alliances between various official or 'dominant' bodies in the service of greater authority and more hegemonic power, critical analysis of the press coverage of these alliances will allow us to judge if the processes are transparent or not, and also how these articles are structured in order to reveal or conceal ideological processes and alliances. As Fairclough states, 'Ideology is the prime means of

manufacturing consent' (2001: 4), and it is in employing CDA to widespread media texts that we shall identify the ideological foundations of language guardians who manufacture consent to their dominant definition and vision of the Spanish language through ideological means.

### **Differences between CDA and language ideology**

Milani (2007) notes that the fields of CDA and language ideology differ on two significant counts. First, there is a difference in the perceived role that language plays in social processes: on the one hand, CDA focuses more on language as a medium, 'through which social inequality and domination are produced, reproduced and/or contested in a variety of contexts in specific historical moments' (2007: 10), whereas scholarship on language ideologies holds that 'social divisions and inequalities are (re)produced and challenged on the basis of perceived or presumed linguistic practices – these in turn are processes whereby images of languages are tied to other categorizations such as group identities, aesthetics, morality, and so forth' (2007: 10, see also Milani and Johnson 2008). Second, the role of social theory as a tool for critically analysing language is seen by CDAnalysts as key to the emancipatory objective of critical work. In contrast, research on language ideologies:

not only often sidelines the linguistic aspect of the texts under scrutiny, but it also questions the reliance on a totalising social theory that can explain, and help intervene in, the workings of those 'grand narratives of dominance' that CDA aims to uncover. (Milani and Johnson 2008: 365)

In questioning the 'totalizing' social theories that CDA uses to explain ideological discourse, Language Ideological research points to the need for a more nuanced explanatory framework which identifies specific individuals, resources and constraints within their particular historical context(s) (see Blommaert 2005). Arguably this is not a contradictory position between the two fields inasmuch as CDA seeks to reverse the opacity and mystification of discourse processes *and* actors; in this case, the drive to go beyond general influences to focus additionally on the specificities of people and contexts can be seen as one of the various ways in which CDA and language ideologies are in fact complementary frameworks. Divergence between the two can be seen at the point where CDA seeks to shed light on discourse processes and actors from a modernist or Marxist position of 'uncovering the truth', whereas Language Ideological scholarship would, on the whole, espouse a more post-structuralist approach that does not recognize one

single truth to be uncovered. Overall, in spite of these slightly divergent notions of how language relates to social processes and theory, the convergence of both approaches does not prevent there being a useful and constructive purpose in bringing the two together. Indeed, there is much to be gained from a more inter-/transdisciplinary appreciation of the strengths of each, in pursuit of 'a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics, heterogeneity and dissonance of the diverse overt and covert processes that typify the political regimentation of language/discourse' (Milani and Johnson 2008: 362). The different analytical angles taken towards uncovering ideological discourses together offer a broader explanation than each approach might otherwise do alone of how language is formed, developed and used in the construction of ideological debates and the reproduction of social inequality.

### **Ideology within research**

One issue raised by a number of scholars and critics of CDA regards the ideological position of researchers themselves, and the role these play in any analysis undertaken. It is clear that ideology normally becomes institutionalized and that higher education institutions are by no means exempt from this phenomenon. As much as academic analysis might be presented as a 'science', which brings with it requirements of investigative balance and rigour, the actual conditions under which research takes place must also be acknowledged, as these – to an extent – embody the choices and assumptions of the researcher. Ricento notes that:

the unreflected interests of academics inevitably influence our choice and interpretation of data, the arguments to which our descriptions contribute, and the values that our analyses embody. (2000a: 4)

It is not the case that individual/institutional choices necessarily negate the need for high standards of academic rigour. However, it should be acknowledged that, as Fairclough comments: 'illusions about the neutrality of academic research should surely have been shattered by now' (2001: 216). While my own ideologies – like those of the standardization agencies this book discusses – may not necessarily rise to discursive consciousness, it is important to engage in some self-reflexivity regarding the position from which I write, and the reasons I embarked upon the writing of this book.

My own interest in – and sensitivity to – issues of language attitudes and ideologies comes from the fact that although I was born in the north-east of

England and lived my first ten years there, very little of the 'Geordie' vocabulary, grammar or accent remain in my language use. The way I speak now largely reflects a supposedly 'neutral' British English accent, typical of the south of the country, and often characterized as a 'standard' accent. This has raised questions about the influential contexts, authorities and institutions that have led to this standardization and the subsequent mismatch between the way I speak, and the expectations and ideologies I have encountered when some people have expressed a view of what I 'should' sound like, given my birthplace.

Although I am an accomplished speaker of Spanish, I was not born into the context that I study in this book, and so my interest in Spanish language ideologies and standardization stems from an academic rather than a personal connection. Hence I consider myself to be an 'informed outsider', and recognize that while I have experience of living in a Spanish-speaking country and a continuing enthusiasm for the language and its related cultures, the fact that I do not 'belong' to these cultures enables me to critique the data from a position of some distance and intellectual freedom. That said, I acknowledge that my own positioning of the subjects being studied, my own framing of their discourses and the way I use language to express my analysis are all open to the same scrutiny that I employ in this study.

Milani and Johnson go further on the issue of researcher reflexivity when they write that 'despite acknowledging their inherent ideological biases, CDA researchers seem to believe that the discourses they produce are somehow "less ideological", "less falsifying" or "more true" than the discourses they investigate – hence their emancipatory force' (Milani and Johnson 2008: 367). To be fair to CDA researchers, it should be clear that their (our?) broad aim is to *open up* discourses to debate, scrutiny and contestation rather than to shut down debate, as is often the objective of the powerful discourses which are the subject of CDA. Thus there is an inherent acceptance that individuals, ideologies, and discourses can (and should) be challenged, and therefore it seems unlikely that any CDA researcher would negate the possibility of having their findings contested on the basis of ideological bias. However, the evidential basis of a critical analysis, along with the recognition of the analyst's own position, go some way to meeting calls for a 'serious commitment to researcher reflexivity', which – as Baxter (2002) and Pennycook (2006) argue – can overcome the dilemma in part (Milani and Johnson 2008: 367). Indeed, this reflexivity twinned with the actual findings of CDAnalysts' research, certainly, contributes to a more adequate, open culture of emancipatory research, in which researchers seek to produce 'alternative and

oppositional narratives that ask questions where others have located answers' (Dean 1994: 4).

## Media discourse

If 'ideology is pervasively present in language' (Fairclough 2001: 2), then the powerful position of the media (and the newspaper press in particular) to inform and influence readers through the written medium is a particularly interesting vehicle of ideological transmission (see Cameron 1995, Eldridge 1995, Eldridge et al. 1997, Fairclough 1995b, Fowler 1991, Philo 1993, 1998, Richardson 2007, van Dijk 1998a, 1998b). Fairclough's view is that:

media discourse should be regarded as the site of complex and often contradictory processes, including ideological processes. . . . Media texts do indeed function ideologically in social control and social reproduction, but they also operate as cultural commodities in a competitive market . . . , are part of the business of entertaining people, are designed to keep people politically and socially informed, are cultural artefacts in their own right, informed by particular aesthetics; and they are at the same time caught up in – reflecting and contributing to – shifting cultural values and identities. (1995b: 47)

The Spanish newspaper press reaches a large readership across a wide social spectrum and geographical territory, even beyond Spain's national borders now with the publication of newspaper material online. These media texts perform an ideological role in society because journalists' writings do not simply recount facts about interesting events within (and beyond) that society. Journalists and editors first make decisions about what is 'newsworthy' or important enough to include for their readers; they then make decisions about how these articles should be presented in terms of the space allocated to them and the section of the press under which the news should be categorized (e.g. national, international, culture, business); linguistic decisions are also made at the writing stage about how news should be framed, described, interpreted and 'delivered' for the consumption of a readership which both is subject to, and generates, the 'shifting cultural values and identities' Fairclough identifies above.

Upon exploring and considering the context of Spain's language debates, it is clear that the Spanish press is still one of the vehicles through which RAE



policy is most widely published, commented upon and diffused. Articles written by members of the Academy regularly feature in the press, and in particular the 'quality press' which prides itself on its good use of the Spanish language. As one professor of Journalism has written (in the press about the press):

Mass media consumption in the Hispanic world is high, and its effects on the linguistic system and on society in general, are both daily and persistent. However, the press still has an important role to play in processes of standardization and control, and this function relates particular to the quality or 'broadsheet' press, which is characterized by its ability to bring about cultural and social regeneration according to prevailing trends of any given moment. (Bernardo Díaz Nosty, *El País*, 7 April 1997)<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to Milroy and Milroy's claim (1999: 29) that the mass media exercises little influence over the adoption of linguistic norms and innovations, Díaz Nosty's analysis is that in the Spanish context, the effects of the audio-visual media on linguistic practices are considerable. This influence includes a continued and significant role for the press, particularly the quality press of which *El País* and *ABC* are the most widely read daily publications. The socio-economic categories into which most readers of these newspapers fall include some of the most educated and influential groups in Spanish society, which clearly has significant consequences for the reinforcing and reproduction of hegemonic ideologies.

Richardson believes that 'journalism exists to enable citizens to better understand their lives and their position(s) in the world' (2007: 7) and, in favour of this idealist vision, claims that 'when the work of journalists emphasizes entertainment, or the activities and opinions of the powerful, or the pursuit of profit in themselves or above the primary function of journalism – to help citizens understand the world and their positions in it – it stops being journalism' (2007: 8). The seemingly noble goal of journalism that Richardson proposes does not exclude the possibility – or the inevitability – of ideological underpinnings permeating the news-producing process. In seeking to 'help' citizens to understand their lives, it is common for a newspaper to reinforce views of what 'their' citizens' lives *are* like, and *should be* like: the reproduction of the model citizen or model reader. The relation between the 'consuming' reader and the 'producing' newspaper sets the latter up as an institution, and thus its ideological foundations and output can be seen as institutional ideologies, as van Dijk writes: 'the ideologies and opinions of newspapers are usually not personal, but social, institutional or political' (1998b: 22). Thus we see that the newspaper

press is a particularly rich and important site for propagating (and therefore locating) many different ideologies. Among these are language ideologies, which are frequently institutionally legitimated, and for this reason the case study for this book examines the Spanish press as an outlet for the institutional ideologies of the RAE as these are expressed through the two major Spanish newspapers, *El País* and *ABC*.

### ***El País***

*El País* is a national daily newspaper, established in 1975, which has become a symbol and 'dominant reference' (Imbert et al. 1986) of post-Franco democratic Spain. It declares itself 'an independent national newspaper, reporting general news, with a clear pro-European stance, advocate of pluralistic democracy based on liberal and social principles, and committed to maintaining democratic and legal order as established in the Constitution' (*El País* 1998: 17).<sup>6</sup> Politically, its analysis is generally left of centre, and while it has previously supported the socialists – particularly during their time in government in the 1980s – it has taken a step back from such close support and is now a more distant critical voice. The media conglomerate Grupo Prisa owns *El País*, along with other significant Spanish media companies including the sports newspaper *As*, the radio channels *Cadena Ser* and *Los 40*, and *EP3*, an online guide to music, cinema and other cultural activities. It is the second bestselling daily newspaper in Spain after *Marca* (a tabloid sports newspaper) with a current average readership of approximately 2 million every day (AIMC 2011: 6). *El País* was quick to produce its first *Libro de estilo* (style guide) just two years after its foundation, and with a strongly enforced in-house style, the newspaper is something of a model of linguistic correctness. This is not entirely unrelated to the fact that its former editor and current Chief Executive of Prisa is Juan Luís Cebrían, a member of the RAE; another regular *El País* columnist until his death was Fernando Lázaro Carreter, the Spanish Academy's former director. The *Libro de estilo* is now in its sixteenth edition (2002) since the first was published in 1977, which perhaps surprisingly demonstrates its propensity to rapidly reflect linguistic innovations.

### ***ABC***

The strongly conservative *ABC* has been running since 1905 and is, in the words of its parent company Vocento, 'a landmark in Spanish journalism in terms of

its political, intellectual and cultural influence, based on its high circulation and on its position in society' (Vocento 2012).<sup>7</sup> In spite of its influential reach into the Spanish establishment and senior business community with the vast majority of readers coming from the upper/upper-middle social classes, numerically it currently only has the sixth largest readership of any Spanish daily newspaper, with approximately 733,000 readers (AIMC 2011: 6). In contrast to *El País*, *ABC* is fervently right-wing in its analysis and pro-Catholic in moral tendency; as such it is still associated by many with Francoist times and values. *ABC* also has its own style guide (2001, 2nd edn) which – perhaps surprisingly – only takes the tone of *strongly recommending* the application of its content, a less categorical stance than *El País*'s mandatory in-house norms (Stewart 1999: 27–8). The style guide is one of the links between *ABC* and the RAE, in that the Prologue of the first edition which ran from 1995 to 2001 was authored by Fernando Lázaro Carreter, and the Epilogue by Luis María Anson, former editor of *ABC* and an Academician since 1998. As in *El País*, the association with the Academy by no means stops with just one or two regular writers or editors: other Academicians are frequently invited (or invite themselves) to contribute opinion articles, interviews and comments on Spanish language matters.

### Data selection and analysis

My earlier comments on ideology within research and the need for openness in terms of the research procedure mean that some comments on the choice of data are important here. The choice of news media for this study was not based primarily on readership figures, but on the differences of position these newspapers take (politically left- and right-leaning respectively, and originating pre- and post-Franco) as well as their similarities (both are among the most widely read newspapers, nationally available and considered to use prestigious Spanish). Accordingly, the kinds of ideologies present within these publications can be taken as representative of the political and ideological positions of a broad segment of Spanish society.

The corpus of relevant data for analysis was based on articles from *El País* and *ABC*, taken over a 10-year period during which the RAE began a significant process of modernization which included the introduction of large-scale digital management of its lexical databases, a broadening of the types of publication coming from the Academy, an increased profile of its work and leaders in the Spanish (and wider Spanish language) media, and a renewed drive to collaborate

with other Spanish language academies from around the world. Another essential feature of the period in question was the launch of the PLP which seeks to bring global coordination, scope and reach to the work of the 22 Academies. Hence, the discourse on standardization at this time was of crucial interest as the Academy geared its practices towards its future endeavours in guarding the Spanish language. Press articles were chosen according to their chronological proximity to five significant events in the ongoing public language debates in Spain and the Spanish-speaking world during this period of the RAE's modernization. These events were (1) the First Congreso Internacional de la Lengua Española (International Spanish Language Congress, Mexico, April 1997), (2) the Second Congreso (Spain, October 2001), (3) the Third Congreso (Argentina, November 2004), (4) publication of the Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts (November 2005) and (5) the Fourth Congreso (Colombia, March 2007). Although there were eight topical categories<sup>8</sup> arising from analysis of the hundreds of articles collected, I have made the decision to restrict the critical analysis of the data and to structure the discussion of this within three main categories: (1) Linguistic unity and the Spanish-speaking community, (2) the role and authority of the RAE and other language guardians, and (3) the Spanish language in the world. These are salient themes not only because under these headings are incorporated the majority of the data articles collected, but also because they represent some of the most prominent and polemic language debates which take place in Spain but whose impact extends far beyond the Iberian peninsula.

My particular interest is in the topics which are discussed within language debates and how these might break down into recurring/ongoing categories of discussion throughout the case study. The reports from *El País* and *ABC* feature the RAE as either a contributing voice or an object of the article's coverage, and my analysis takes two approaches: first, how is the article itself framed by the journalist, and how does it therefore show evidence of being a text produced by a particular writer in a particular context with particular constraints (cultural, political, linguistic, institutional)? Secondly, and perhaps of more relevance to the main thrust of my study, what ideologies underpin – or are evident in – quotations from RAE representatives (the director, office-holders and other well-known and oft-cited RAE members)? These two focuses are linked in that when taking the latter 'raw data' from RAE interviews and statements, the process of framing takes place when the journalist then makes decisions about what to include and how to embed direct quotations in the article as a whole, also called recontextualization (Blommaert 2005: 46).

## Summary

Recent scholarship on language ideologies shows its focus on the 'intersections of language and human beings in a social world' (Woolard 1998: 3), and how these points of intersection emerge from their foundations in linguistic communities and practices. As such, the language of particular speakers and groups of speakers carries not only functional meaning but it also indexes characteristics and values which become matters of agreement, contestation and hegemonic struggle, not only in interpersonal discourse but also institutional discourse. Yet the habitus of institutional discourse tends to obscure who is saying what and on what basis, and so such discourse becomes 'naturalized', agency and responsibility are consequently shrouded in 'common-sense' assumptions, and – as Gramsci (1985) highlights – this leads to unquestioned hegemony of state or other institutional ideological practices and the manufacturing of consent to these practices by a large part of society.

Woolard's claim that language ideologies are rarely, if ever, about language alone, shows us how language ideologies are constructed on the basis of not only linguistic but also social, political and historical factors which relate dialectically: that is, language ideologies emerge from and equally transform particular real-world perceptions and situations. Consequently, it is important to take not only a 'snapshot' of the contemporary context of language ideologies, but also to understand the historical developments and changes that have conditioned and shaped them.

In order to identify and then unearth the naturalized ideologies which become embedded in society, an analytical tool such as CDA is necessary. This approach considers how language use can conceal 'structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control' (Wodak 2001: 2) and so it seeks to illuminate the 'hidden agendas' of discourse practices, textual patterns and the power-based relationships between text producers and consumers. It also reverses the obfuscation of agency, revealing who the ideological brokers and actors are behind hegemonic, institutional ideologies, which are frequently accepted as authoritative yet anonymous, representing the supposed 'view from nowhere'. CDA, in spite of a number of conceptual differences from ideas established in the field of language ideologies, has the potential to bring about complementary explanations of what is going on in discursive practices if it is used hand in hand with the approaches of language ideology scholars. This is because there are other, more obvious points of convergence between these two disciplines which lead us to the discovery of hidden agendas, ideological

vocabulary, strategies of naturalization and the location of ideology in texts which – if applied with openness and reflexivity by researchers – result in a clear understanding of how language is used for powerful ends, and how those who are potentially manipulated by such linguistic strategies can be aware of these and, hence, be ‘emancipated’ from their effects.

One of the most powerful institutions in spreading ideas through the strategic employment of linguistic and rhetorical strategies is the media, in both its printed and – increasingly – online formats. The influence of print media extends beyond simply the formation of readers’ opinions on the subject matter, to propagating the ideal use of language, and language variety, as well as visions of that language in relation to others. For this reason, the relationship between the press and the RAE is of utmost interest here: these are both powerful public institutions, and their capacity to influence public opinion and praxis rests in part on their ability to propagate authoritative views and ‘manufacture consent’ to these on a wide scale through discursive means. Having set out the theoretical direction of the book in this opening chapter, I move on in the next chapter to consider the specific role of a particular type of ideological agent: the language academy. Furthermore, I examine what role this language authority has fulfilled in the ideological framing and standardization of the Spanish language.

## Notes

- 1 I use this term synonymously with the terms ‘ideologies of language’ and ‘linguistic ideology/ies’.
- 2 One notable contribution to this gap in scholarship, and particularly relevant to this study, is Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman (2002a).
- 3 Originally developed from Critical Linguistics (CL) and Critical Language Awareness studies of scholars such as Günther Kress, Norman Fowler and Bob Hodge (see Fowler et al. 1979, Hodge and Kress 1979). For more detailed discussions of the origins and development of CDA, see Blommaert (2005), Wodak (2001) and van Dijk (2001a).
- 4 The difference between these two approaches, as represented by the lowercase and uppercase titles, is that those engaging in CDA seek to draw from, and contribute to, the emerging discipline that I have been describing in this section. Such scholars recognize the usefulness of the methodological guidelines suggested by Fairclough, Wodak and others, and identify with the field of CDA. Those who are, *de facto*, ‘doing’ critical discourse analysis without associating themselves with the field will

often take issue with some of the theoretical, social or methodological aspects of the more coordinated approach of CDAnalysts.

- 5 Los medios audiovisuales tienen un mayor consumo popular en la cultura hispana y, sin duda, sus efectos sobre el sistema lingüístico, y en general sobre la sociedad, son los más cotidianos y persistentes. Sin embargo, aún cabe a la prensa un papel importante en los procesos de normalización y control, función que corresponde más concretamente a los diarios de calidad o de influencia rectora que se caracterizan por su capacidad de inducción de pautas de regeneración cultural y social, acordes con la evolución del pensamiento y de los hábitos de un momento dado.
- 6 'un periódico independiente, nacional, de información general, con una clara vocación europeísta, defensor de la democracia plural según los principios liberales y sociales, y que se compromete a guardar el orden democrático y legal establecido en la Constitución.'
- 7 'diario nacional con una elevada presencia e influencia entre líderes de opinión y personas relevantes en la vida social, empresarial, y política española.'
- 8 The eight categories were Contextual data, Corpus, Economic value of language, History of language, Panhispanism/Spanish in the world, Role and authority of RAE, Other languages and Unity/community of Spanish-speakers.

# Language Authorities and the Standardization of Spanish

## Introduction

The propensity to evaluate how language is used, based on ideologies of how language *should* be used, can hardly be considered a recent phenomenon. It is certainly centuries older than the field of language ideological research itself. Cameron coined the term ‘verbal hygiene’ for the widespread desire to judge language use, defining this as ‘the urge to meddle in matters of language (or more precisely, the set of normative metalinguistic practices that arise from this urge to meddle’ (1995: vii). From their origins as spoken acts, human languages later became written systems as alphabets and writing systems developed in order to make communication travel across both territory and time. In order for this to happen, a commonly agreed system of symbols governed by what later emerged as a set of ‘standards’ were used so that a message written by one language user could be understood elsewhere and at a different time by another user of that same language. However, it seems that over time, the expectation of uniformity in how language was written extended to an expectation of uniformity in speech as well as writing. In other words, the nature of language in many developed societies changed from being focused on spoken production as a source or ‘authority’, to having writing as the example of how language should be (re)produced and used. Consequently, criteria for the use of written language have in some ways been inflected back on to spoken language so that even speech has become an object of evaluation.

The subsequent importance attached to graphi-centrism has sought to minimize variation not just for the sake of convenience or effective communication, but because of the belief that there are in fact ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ ways of using language. What we are dealing with here, then, is a very particular language



ideology, which Milroy and Milroy refer to as the 'ideology of standardization' (1999: 19). This chapter will reaffirm why standardization is best considered as an ideology rather than simply a set of activities or practices. 'Underlying this urge to standardize', writes Spolsky, 'is a belief in correctness, that there is a correct and desirable form of the language, distinct from normal practice' (2004: 27), but this notion of 'good versus bad' or 'correct versus incorrect' language use is not solely a grassroots activity, process of self-correction or self-appointed 'verbal hygienists' (a term coined by Cameron 1995). It depends on the existence of institutions which not only promote the idea of a correct, standard language variety, but which are responsible (often by their own appointment) for providing that standardized version of a language which is deemed to carry prestige. This chapter will go on to consider the role of language academies as standardizing institutions, and the RAE in particular.

## Standard language ideology

### **Defining standardization**

Standard language ideology (SLI), or the 'ideology of standardization', is a particular linguistic ideology which has been well embedded in institutions such as Academies, educational establishments and the press. In basic terms, standardization represents the 'planned and centralized regulation of language' (Joseph 1987: 14) to arrive at a form of language 'which lies beyond all the variability of usage in offering unity and coherence to what otherwise appears diverse and disunited. It is the literary form of the language that is to be used and recognized all over the national territory' (Crowley 2003: 84). The principal characteristics of a standard are that it begins as one of many, linguistically equal spoken dialects; it has an alphabet and consequently a written form; this codified and written form of speech is then promoted from dialect to language (Haugen 1972: 97); it is superposed (Haugen 1972: 102) and taught by national institutions; and it is viewed not only as a functional tool but also as an icon of national identity. The process of standardization itself is part of a larger phenomenon of Language Planning, which Cooper defines as 'deliberate efforts to influence the behaviour of other with respect to the acquisition, structure or functional allocation of their language codes' (1989: 45). Language planning efforts – which can be seen as concrete measures originating in more general language policies (Grin 2003, Schiffman 1996, Shohamy 2006, Spolsky 2004) – are directed towards the management of the language's corpus, status and acquisition. Haugen (1972)

suggests a taxonomy of four stages through which undeveloped languages pass in order to achieve 'minimal variation of form' and 'maximal variation of function' in a given language: these are selection, codification, elaboration and acceptance.

*Selection* of a vernacular to be the standard variety within a national context might seem at first to be a matter of endorsing one variety and promoting its use, but it also means that all other varieties are deselected and their speakers – implicitly or explicitly – excluded from enjoying the status accorded to the standard. Standard variety users are favoured with 'prestige as norm-bearers and a head start in the race for power and position. If a recognized elite already exists with a characteristic vernacular, its norm will almost inevitably prevail' (Haugen 1972: 109). The ideological dimension of selection is based on more than just positive prestige; as Lippi-Green contends, 'standard language ideology is concerned not so much with the choice of one possible variant, but with the elimination of socially unacceptable difference' (1997: 173). *Codification* encompasses efforts by experts such as linguists, philologists and lexicologists to produce a single norm by fixing the selected language variety, first through alphabetization if this does not already exist; then through securing conventions on orthography, lexicon and grammar, all with the aim of achieving 'minimal variation in form' (Haugen 1972: 107). *Elaboration* seeks to widely extend the use and influence of the standard variety in all possible domains to achieve 'maximal variation in function' (Haugen 1972: 107). Part of the underlying argument for standardization seems to be that the more complex a language, the more functions it can fulfil, leading to a 'superior' language. This includes the necessity of denominating, for example, the latest scientific and technological advances in the standard language. *Acceptance* of a standard variety will – according to the ideology of standardization – increase the number of standard language users. Members of a community are encouraged to accept its usage and realize that it is in their favour to actively do so. As Haugen illustrates:

A standard language that is the instrument of an authority, such as a government, can offer its users material rewards in the form of power and position. . . . National languages have offered membership in the nation, an identity that gives one entrée into a new kind of group, which is not just kinship, or government, or religion, but a novel and peculiarly modern brew of all three. (1972: 109–10)

The rewards of accepting standard language usage are, in fact, a 'carrot and stick' approach: those who accept what the state apparatus establishes will be rewarded and included; those who do not will be penalized and excluded. Joseph suggests

that rewards include social mobility, the prospect of attaining a good position in society, a fuller interchange of ideas through clear, standard communication and prevention from any 'humiliation' one might feel by not using the societal standard (1987: 44). The implied promises of standard language are, Lippi-Green writes: 'Sound like us and success will be yours. Doors will open; barriers will disappear' (1997: 50). While universal possibilities for personal and social advancement appear a laudable offer, for those who are unable or unwilling to sideline their native language variety (if, indeed there can be a choice) and adhere to a proposed standard system, the implied consequences are: success will not be yours. Doors will close. Barriers will remain. So the ideology of standardization is, as numerous scholars argue, not just about language alone; other social desiderata are veiled by the struggle to control language, meaning there are clearly social and political ideologies at work in standardization. This goes some way to explaining why a user of a non-prestigious language variety may find their 'social mobility is blocked and [they] may, for example, be refused access to certain types of employment without any official admission that the refusals depend partly or wholly on his or her use of language' (Milroy and Milroy 1999: 2).

### **Standardization as a process**

Social, political and commercial needs motivate the process of standardization which leads Milroy and Milroy to suggest that while writing systems are easily standardized,

absolute standardization of a spoken language is never achieved (the only fully standardized language is a dead language). Therefore it seems appropriate to speak more abstractly of standardization as an ideology, and a standard language as an idea in the mind rather than a reality – a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent. (1999: 19)

The fact that standardization is far more about a concept and process, rather than a final product as such, reinforces the view that standardization serves non-linguistic purposes perhaps as much – if not more – than linguistic ones. SLI discursively constructs a belief that there is (and ought to be) a common linguistic ideal to which language users within a determined community (whether local, regional, national or supranational) should aspire. On the one hand this is based on the argument that all members of a society/community should have universal

access to a common language variety for practical purposes such as ease of communication. On the other hand, SLI stresses uniformity and emphasizes authority and respect for a prestigious language variety, which points to the value of conformity, adherence to norms, and educational achievement of the 'standard' language, while backgrounding any perceived value of linguistic (ethnic, social, racial, etc.) diversity, or non-conformity to standard and prestigious norms.

The process of standardization with its underlying ideologies consists of 'a struggle to control language by defining its nature' (Cameron 1995: 8). Cameron argues that 'verbal hygienists' can be 'expert' writers, editors, politicians, educationalists and Academicians, as well as 'lay' non-linguists and members of the public, and that all offer their observations on the 'state of the language' and how it is best managed. In particular, though, the 'experts' or craft professionals dedicate much of their time to 'cleaning up' non-standard language use, and these experts are agents of standardization with power to define the language through the prominent voice they have as writers of books, dictionaries and grammars, teachers who instruct others according to such publications, and editors of the media. The common thread of these experts is that they all represent 'institutions' – media, education, government and other public bodies – who are involved in elevating a particular way of speaking and writing which is held to be not only linguistically superior and desirable per se, but which also embodies desirable social traits and reflects not only a 'good speaker' but also a 'good citizen' in other ways. Lippi-Green comments on this 'social ordering', recognizing that:

[P]erhaps it is necessary to choose one social group to serve as a model. Perhaps there is even some rationale for choosing the 'educated' as this group. But there is nothing objective about this practice. It is the ordering of social groups in terms of who has authority to determine how language is best used. (1997: 55)

### **Ideology, anonymity and authenticity of the standard**

Schiffman (1996: 88) and Cameron (1995: 163), among others, consider that when considering SLI rhetoric, it is of little value to query why there are standards in language; instead we should be seeking to find out whose usage is considered to be 'common' usage or which norms are being promoted as 'the' framework to adhere to, and in whose interests this is taking place. Arguments for language standardization are often 'naturalized' into conventions so that it appears they are not manmade and therefore have no 'authors' (Woolard 1998: 21). Conventions with no identified authors become anonymous and are not

seen as having derived from any particular territory (Woolard 2007), nor perceived to be at all ideological. As a result, the link between the standard and the nation-state or other authoritative institutions is (apparently) severed and the socio-political roots of a standard variety are obscured. This enables the promotion of a supposedly disinterested and more widely available standard variety, legitimized by the applicability of its norms across groups and nation-states precisely because it is not perceived as the preserve of any one of these. However, Joseph and Taylor are right to question the supposed objectivity of such a position when they state that:

It is our belief that any enterprise which claims to be non-ideological and value-neutral, but which in fact remains covertly ideological and value-laden, is the more dangerous for this deceptive subtlety. (Joseph and Taylor 1990: 2)

The assumptions which come to underlie the existence of and need for a standard language are – by nature of being assumptions – seldom explained, but are accepted as ‘common sense’. SLI promotes the common-sense assumption, Cameron argues, by positing that ‘such-and-such a usage is “just a fact about the grammar of x”’ (1995: 6). It is crucial, then, to question the ‘common-sense’ arguments which often accompany standardization discourse and examine the motivations for the choice of the standard variety. These motivations are often hidden behind claims to anonymity: that is, the legitimacy of the standard variety comes from its representation as ‘socially neutral, universally available, natural and objective’ (Woolard 2005) and thus it is perceived as *the* language of the general public. Moreover, ‘mystification’ in language debates denies that an identifiable authority is, or could be, responsible for such common-sense assumptions (see Lippi-Green 1997: 41–62). While such anonymity leaves language standardization with the appearance of political neutrality (or certainly of unspecified origin), Milroy and Milroy argue that the desired effect of anonymity and the proliferation of common-sense arguments are themselves products of ideology. They comment that:

If a belief is said to arise from ‘common sense’, the implication is that it need not be subject to further scrutiny and analysis. . . . Such an appeal to common sense is powerful, as it engages an audience at a gut level at which it can readily respond. It also implies that the experts (who may raise objections to ‘common sense’) can be ignored; if we apply common sense our problems will be solved. (Milroy and Milroy 1999: 135–6)

What reason could there be for deflecting the attention and analysis of language users from arguments regarding standard language and its 'common-sense' basis of communicative efficiency and access for all? Woolard reminds us that naturalized, cultural conceptions are 'partial, interest-laden, contestable and contested' (1998: 10); therefore viewing language standardization from an ideological rather than a naturalized viewpoint will help to consider the interests of the very real, identifiable actors involved.

The issue of authority in setting prestigious linguistic norms is underpinned by linguistic authenticity. In other words, a dialect which has become the standard language variety is seen as prestigious on the basis of it being authentically rooted in its original speech community. Woolard suggests that:

As a linguistic ideology, authenticity situates the value of a language in its association with an identifiable community and an expression of the spirit of that community. The 'authentic' voice is deeply rooted in a place and consequently its value is local. (2007: 131)<sup>1</sup>

Thus the particular social, regional or national group whose language variety is promoted as a national (or global) standard maintains linguistic authority in ongoing discourses and language debates. Consequently, this group's discourse (debates, decisions, publications, language use or literature) is received as authentic in legitimizing the form of a standard language. Nevertheless, there is still a sense in which the position of this elite group is not perceived to have come about by any identifiable 'agency': justification for a standard – and the view of that group's 'standard' in particular – continues to be a matter of common sense and the purported benefit of the entire community, and not a matter of protecting the interests or perpetuating the authority of the elite group.

### **Standardization and 'prestige by transfer'**

Human experience shows that when confronted with a concept or entity that is somehow different, people make evaluations based on their understanding or experience of this 'other' in opposition to 'self'. In terms of language, variation is a sociolinguistic axiom, yet 'it seems inevitable', argues Joseph, 'that once people do become conscious of variants of behaviour, they evaluate them' (1987: 30). Constructing evaluations of language varieties will not only draw on features of the language variety itself, but also the characteristics of typical speakers of that variety. If such speakers are popularly considered to be

educated, upstanding citizens with professional careers, for example, then the prestige of those social factors becomes associated with the linguistic variety and is thus 'transferred' to those speakers. Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman observe how varieties of Spanish 'have often become iconized, that is . . . discursively associated with features that supposedly reflect the spirit of the community' (2002c: 12). In distinguishing between standard/prestigious and non-standard/unprestigious language varieties and (by 'iconization') associated features of a language community, polarized evaluations are reified. The ideal citizen speaks a 'good', approved variety of the language and is by inference awarded the status of a model, ideal speaker, authenticated by speaking with the 'reference accent' and by using standardized written forms and vocabulary. What follows is that attitudes to the standard versus non-standard debate in public discourse reflect and stem from wider attitudes to non-linguistic issues; in other words, 'stylistic values are symbolic of moral, social, ideological and political values' (Cameron 1995: 77). It appears, then, that SLI encourages language users to make judgements not necessarily just about what is said, but about how it is said and even who is saying it. If 'language attitudes stand proxy for a much more comprehensive set of social and political attitudes' (Milroy and Milroy 1999: 45), then social allegiance to, for example, the non-powerful class, gender, an ethnic minority or regional origins can be the source of language discourse which is not necessarily seen as authoritative or authentic, as discussed above. The likely outcome is that a language variety, and the social allegiances associated with that language, will be rejected from public, 'prestigious' discourse (Lippi-Green 1997: 63).

One consequence of associating linguistic traits with social ones, along with the endowment of particular varieties with prestige, is that a linguistic 'order' is established in which a hierarchy of language varieties exists and is mapped on to other kinds of order (social, political, moral, etc.). Language users are consequently 'judged' as to their character and the validity of contributions they might make to public discourse based on the choice of language variety. It then follows that 'language acts as a prime and ready diagnostic' (Lippi-Green 1997: 103) and if someone is unwilling (or unable) to use the standardized form of the community's language, then their input and involvement is somehow inappropriate and deemed to be less valuable than that of someone who uses 'proper' or more widely prestigious language. Value judgements are made on both spoken and written language too, with the grammaticality (and therefore the value) of the former being more permanently visible as a good example or a bad one. Recent publications in the United Kingdom (e.g. Cochrane 2004, Cook

2004, Crystal 2006, Humphrys 2004, Taggart and Wines 2008, Truss 2003) have sought to address the ‘scourge’ of bad spelling and grammar in both public and private examples of written English. Value is attached to the appropriateness of a writer’s choice of vocabulary, register, style and punctuation, and a number of style institutions and publications are held up as exemplary in such matters (see Cameron 1995: 78–115). It can be said that this phenomenon of assigning positive values to a chosen standard language and negative values to all other territorial language varieties acts pays limited attention to linguistic features; much more emphasis is given to desirability of the non-linguistic features associated with a language variety (‘prestige by transfer’ as Woolard describes it (1998: 21)).

SLI discourse also works to promote a prestigious language variety by appealing not to reason but to more naturally occurring human ‘instincts’ such as pleasure, acceptance or worry. ‘Where verbal hygiene “works”, it works not by controlling our thoughts, but by mobilizing our desires and our fears’ (Cameron 1995: 222), as in the example of the 1980s debate surrounding the teaching of grammar in the National Curriculum in the United Kingdom. Reports commissioned by the then Conservative government reported on the state of English language teaching and proposed a standardization of the curriculum, leading the Thatcherite politician Norman Tebbit to comment that:

If you allow standards to slip to the stage where good English is no better than bad English, where people turn up filthy at school . . . all these things tend to cause people to have no standards at all, and once you lose standards then there’s no imperative to stay out of crime. (Cited in Cameron 1995: 94)

This reverses the ‘prestige by transfer’ principle, so that a lack of standards in language is seen to equate to a lack of standards in general moral behaviour and thus is transferred onto the terrain of ‘bad’ English, representing a ‘moralistic’ approach to discourse on English language teaching, and contributing to moral panic. Milroy and Milroy explain that ‘this association of “bad” English with criminality is not really about language at all – it is a plea for obedience to authority in all things’ (1999: 44). We see then how SLI and its prescriptivist stance to teaching draws on discourses of discipline and authority to support a strengthening of the idealized standard variety, lauding it as a ‘solution’ to social and moral decline. Discussions such as these which call for a return to basic moral standards (seen as superior and pre-existent) can be considered parallel to the discussions on returning the language to its ‘golden age’ state.



## Language academies

Over the past four centuries we have seen the emergence of one particular institution which has played a key role in driving forward the process of language standardization, and that is the language academy (see Spolsky 2011). The first academies were established during the historical period of nation-building between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in western European countries such as France, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Portugal and of course, Spain. The new 'nations' sought the establishment of one national language, and, with the birth in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of the *Accademia della Crusca* in Italy (1582) and France's *Académie Française* (1635), the model was set for the RAE to follow in the early eighteenth century to purify, guard and develop what had become Spain's national language. The twentieth century saw a proliferation of language academies being established across the world, and even today plans are afoot for new academies such as the Gaelic Language Academy in Scotland which is currently being consulted upon. Academies are an instrument of corpus planning, that is, the body which seeks to codify the language, as per Haugen's taxonomy of standardization (1972). The self-proclaimed mission of the *Académie Française*, for example, has been 'To watch over the French language and to fulfil acts of patronage' (*Académie Française* 2005).<sup>2</sup> To accomplish this, 'The Academy has, in the past, worked to fix the language, in order to make it a common heritage for all French people and all those who use our language. Today, the Academy acts to maintain the qualities and monitor the developments of French. It defines its proper use' (*Académie Française* 2005).<sup>3</sup>

Academies have sought to achieve their regulatory objectives by producing guides which serve as authorities on the different aspects of linguistic production, namely the three 'pillars' of a language: the dictionary, grammar and orthography.

The normative and standardizing activity of the academies is based precisely on these three essential axes, considered to constitute the essence of human languages but which, as we argue, do not at all. (Moreno Cabrera 2008: 520)<sup>4</sup>

Moreno Cabrera's argument against the huge prestige that the three types of publication tend to have is based on the acceptance of linguistic variation as a fact of life, and on the rejection of the idea that any linguistic usage that does not adhere to the prescribed guidelines produced by the academies should be considered incorrect or a corruption of the written norm. Nevertheless, the

vision offered by academies early on in their histories was that there existed a 'golden age' during which the standard language reached its peak. The notion of academies 'fighting' against non-standard influences and even 'dark social forces' (Cameron, 1995: 96) that might contaminate the purity or elegance of a language has been largely prevalent throughout their histories, and has been used to justify the need for dictionaries and other publications. However, the outlook and role of language academies has, by virtue of the differing histories of their respective languages as well as the transformed contexts they now operate in, had to change, as can be seen by looking closely at the specific case of Spain's Academy.

## The Real Academia Española (Royal Academy of the Spanish Language)

### **A brief history**

It was in August 1713 that the Castilian aristocrat Don Manuel Fernández Pacheco y Zúñiga first gathered together 11 men from the spheres of state, the Court, scholarship and religion, to discuss the perceived threat to Spanish culture and language of the French Bourbon dynasty in the Spanish Court. The aim of these *tertulias* (literary gatherings) was the production of a dictionary which would document and enrich the Castilian language in the same way that it had done for French, Italian and Portuguese. The arrival of the Bourbons brought about the adoption of many French facets into the Spanish way of life as well as into the Spanish language, and hence the founding Academicians urgently felt that something 'had to be done' to protect the Spanish language from the ensuing linguistic and cultural corruption. They therefore turned to the 'golden age' language of the sixteenth century to find a 'pure' Castilian and a plumb-line against which to measure variation from a supposed linguistic ideal. Not only had that century witnessed an output of literature (from Cervantes, Lope de Vega, San Juan de la Cruz, Quevedo) which was valued on its own literary merits and is held as canonical even today, but there was also the factor that the sixteenth century was – at that time – the last historical period during which Castilian was considered as 'pure' before the perceived invasion of French culture and language. At the outset the RAE's focus was on protecting Castilian from the outside influences of foreignisms and borrowings, reflecting the importance of the association of language with its national context (linguistic nationalism, as it has been termed).

Royal assent was given to the RAE in 1715, and its statutes determined that it existed to:

. . . cultivate and fix the purity and elegance of the Castilian language, eradicating all errors in its construction, style and vocabulary which have been brought about by ignorance, careless habits, neglect and too much liberty to innovate. (Fundación y Estatutos de la RAE (1715), cited in Zamora Vicente 1999: 35)<sup>5</sup>

Motives for the Academicians' work were based on the belief in a perfected golden age Castilian which was allegedly suffering distortion by the ignorance and excessive variation evident among its users. The RAE's mission statement also showed a belief that any language change should be carefully managed by the *Académicos* who were able to distinguish foreign, antiquated, low-class and invented terms from those which were native, commonly used, high-class and authentic; in other words, they distinguished 'correct' from 'incorrect' language. Thus, language variation was glossed as entirely negative and was brought about – they believed – not by sociolinguistic factors as we understand them, but by the 'undesirable' traits of ignorance and lack of care for the 'correct' structure of Castilian. Accordingly, the goal of these experts was the purity and elegance of a carefully managed standard language.

Language standardization and nationalism are linked in the statutes' description of who should be an Academician:

Each one must be a subject of sound judgement, a decent respectable person, zealous for the glory of the Nation and language, and capable of working on the matters proposed by this Academy. (Fundación y Estatutos de la RAE (1715), cited in Zamora Vicente 1999: 35)<sup>6</sup>

As can be seen, the function of the RAE in its early years was clear: through the codification of Castilian and the setting-in-motion of Dictionary and Grammar production, it contributed to the forming of a common political identity based on the language: in other words, linguistic nationalism (Lodares 2002, Mar-Molinero 2000b).

Over nearly three centuries, the RAE statutes have been revised to reflect the changes in the political and cultural context as well as in the RAE itself. The most recent statutes represent a radical step forward in the Academy's function, as is clear from the first Article:

The Academy is an institution with its own legal status whose principal mission is to ensure that the essential unity of the Spanish language, as

maintained across the Hispanic world, is not fractured by the changes that the language experiences in its constant adaptation to the needs of its speakers. (Real Academia Española 1995: 7)<sup>7</sup>

While to some degree this acknowledges linguistic change as a 'linguistic fact of life' (Lippi-Green 1997: ch. 1), it also presupposes that the 'essential' linguistic unity across the Spanish-speaking world (however and by whoever that might be measured) is of greater importance than the function of language to meet the diverse communicative needs of its users through natural innovation. As such, the RAE is currently the 'guardian' of this linguistic unity throughout the worldwide community of Spanish-speakers (a 'panhispanic' approach, see Chapter 6).

Today, the Academy's prestige is debatable. Some would argue that in the twentieth century the RAE was generally considered to be out of touch with contemporary language use (Stewart 1999: 15), and that 'the Academy has lost prestige, and even in Spain its most solemn decrees are hardly taken seriously' (Butt and Benjamin 2000: vii). Yet the RAE insists that it is the rightful institution to face the linguistic issues of the twenty-first century, and that it has updated its practices and technological tools accordingly. It also maintains that there is a continuing demand for its activities and publications, referencing the hundreds of queries that the Academy receives on a daily basis from the Spanish-speaking public who seek its decisions on matters of 'correct' language use (Ortografía 1999, *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* 2005). The former *El País* editor Álex Grijelmo writes that 'Spanish speakers continually want to hear the voice of the Academy, because beyond the superficial yet occasionally well-founded criticisms of it, there is still a sense of profound admiration for the undoubted intellectual stature of its members' (2001: 369).<sup>8</sup> Again this shows how the non-linguistic intellectual stature of the Academicians (who increasingly come from a variety of non-language-specialist backgrounds) invokes a 'prestige by transfer' on their linguistic abilities and pronouncements.

## Normative publications

### *Dictionaries*

The most important and visible product of the Academy is its principal dictionary, the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* (DRAE). Work began on the first version as soon as the RAE was founded; three centuries later, the Dictionary is in its 22nd edition, and in keeping with the times, it has radically updated the

sources of entries, the process of collating them and the way it is published. The DRAE and other publications draw from the digital database (*Banco de datos del español*) created by the RAE as part of its recent modernization programme and which now contain over 270 million lexical entries (Real Academia Española 2001: x) collated from the press, radio and television programmes, internet, and suggestions or queries which come directly from the Spanish-speaking public to the Academy, via letter or e-mail. By means of its digital corpora, the Academy is now able to produce new versions of the dictionary in digital format, as a CD-ROM and an online dictionary as well as the hardback and paperback copies. The subsequent wide distribution in homes and institutions continues to make the Dictionary a significant instrument in sealing the RAE's authority in standardizing vocabulary.

Another major change in the production of the Dictionary has been the 'panhispanic' approach of the Academy's work: regionalisms from outside of Spain are included in the DRAE, and for this it depends on the collaboration of the 'sister Academies' for the incorporation and acceptance of such terms into the lexicon. The preface of the latest printed DRAE states that:

This step has been a very important one: it has more than doubled the number of Americanisms in articles, acceptances and meanings, which now exceed 28,000. With this we are on the right path to achieve a truly panhispanic dictionary, that reflects not only peninsular Spanish but that of the entire Spanish-speaking world. (Real Academia Española 2001: x)<sup>9</sup>

The increasingly global nature of communication has led the RAE itself to make its dictionary representative of the Spanish language as a whole, and certainly of Spanish from beyond just Spain. The 28,000 *americanismos* form approximately one-third of the lexicon (c.83,000 entries) and so must be seen as representing a significant proportion of the working vocabulary. The question remains, though, as to whether the other 55,000 terms are indeed 'panhispanic' and part of a unified lexicon which is comprehensible throughout the Spanish-speaking world, or whether there are terms which are particular to the Spanish peninsula and should therefore be marked as *regionalismos* too. Presenting terms which are particular to Iberia (*peninsularismos*) as unmarked suggests they are either common to all Spanish-speakers, or core to a vision of standard Spanish; either way, this decision is based on a particular ideology of the Spanish language which places Spain firmly at the centre of the Spanish-speaking world in prestige, even if not in terms of the number of speakers which total less than 10 per cent of all native speakers globally.

In addition to regionalisms, another aspect of variation within Spanish for which the RAE has drawn criticism is the way in which the gendered (M/F) features of Spanish are represented in dictionaries and how these supposedly reflect or represent social realities in specific, gendered ways. A number of general studies have been published which consider how sexism has come to be institutionalized within the structures and usage of Spanish (e.g. Bengoechea 2011, 2005; Calero Fernández 1999; García Meseguer 1988, 1994; Lledó Cunill 1992). These have shown that the use of the masculine as generic (e.g. *el hombre* for humankind), asymmetrical references to women (e.g. *Don Luis y Señorita Ana*, rather than *Doña Ana*) and the use of masculine titles for professional women (e.g. *la primer ministro* rather than *la primera ministra*) are established sexist language practices by which women and femininity are not treated equally to men and masculinity, and are even invisibilized from particular aspects of discourse (Stewart 1999: 31–5). Other studies go further in suggesting that the RAE itself – and in particular its flagship DRAE – sanction some lexical and grammatical terms and prohibit/discredit others. In doing so, the male-dominated RAE is held responsible for the perpetuation of ideologically sexist language practices (Bengoechea et al. 1998, Lledó Cunill et al. 2004). Debates about gendered language in Spanish are ongoing, and bring various language ideologies into conflict, chiefly those which propose linguistic reform in pursuit of non-sexist language, and those which reject ‘tampering’ with the language for such a purpose.

In addition, the RAE produces other dictionaries. The *Diccionario escolar* (School Dictionary) or *Diccionario del estudiante* (Student’s Dictionary) is aimed at secondary-level school pupils, and as well as seeking to include a reduced core Spanish vocabulary (devoid of archaisms and peninsular and American regionalisms), includes a short grammar and orthography section. The *Diccionario manual e ilustrado* (Manual and Illustrated Dictionary) was an updated supplement to the DRAE, establishing norms for any terms adopted between publications of the main dictionary. The first edition took over a century to publish, and the fourth edition (1989) is its most recent. The mammoth *Diccionario histórico de la lengua española* (Historical Dictionary of Spanish) was begun prior to the Civil War but suffered setbacks when the first two volumes were destroyed during a bombing of Madrid, and when subsequent efforts lost both momentum and resources. The project has now been relaunched as the ‘New Historical Dictionary of Spanish’ with government funding and a team of workers from the Academy’s *Instituto de Lexicografía* (Institute of Lexicography) (Pascual Rodríguez 2006).

Of particular interest is the 2005 *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts, DPD) which 'solves the linguistic doubts of today's speakers through clear and well-reasoned answers' (Real Academia Española 2006c).<sup>10</sup> Its target market is 'anyone interested in using the Spanish language adequately' (Real Academia Española 2006c<sup>11</sup>), yet offers no explanation of what is meant by 'adequately', and there is little discussion of adequacy in terms of different purposes, registers, situations, and so on. Some of the topics covered in the DPD refer to written language only, such as dubious spellings, accents, abbreviations and capital letters; others offer solutions to queries about spoken language, such as stress, neologisms, borrowings, gender and agreements. Solutions are presented as recommendations rather than imperatives, revealing ambiguity in its approach to the 'descriptive' versus 'prescriptive' goals of dictionaries. On the one hand, the DPD presents answers in the format 'It is recommended . . .', which displays a careful approach to the exercise of linguistic authority. On the other hand, queries are introduced with bold headings asking '¿Is it correct to say . . .?', '¿Is the correct form . . .?', '¿Should one say . . . or . . .?', and in one of the slogans which appear intermittently throughout the DPD at the top of certain pages, the statement is made that: 'The Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts is a *normative dictionary* as its decisions and recommendations are based on norms which currently govern the correct use of the Spanish language. Incorrect or discouraged forms are indicated with the ⊗ symbol' (Real Academia Española 2006b, original emphasis).<sup>12</sup>

The Academy hails the DPD and other recent publications as 'descriptive', or 'normative without being prescriptive'. However, descriptive publications – by the very fact that they are presented for public consumption – are essentially still prescriptive. A salient question to ask of supposedly descriptive works is 'Why would anyone seek guidance from a text that did nothing more than describe their own behaviour?' (Cameron 1995: 48). The Academy also presented this dictionary (and all its current activities and products) as panhispanic, produced with the full collaboration of the 21 sister Academies in the Americas.

The Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts is a panhispanic dictionary not only because the twenty academies have worked side by side on its elaboration. It is also panhispanic because not only does it take account of the norms that are common to all Spanish-speaking areas, it also acknowledges the differences between the Spanish standard and American standard (where these differences exist), or between the norm of a particular country or group of countries and that which governs general Spanish. (Real Academia Española 2006b)<sup>13</sup>

We see here the image of the Academies working side by side and drawing together the norms of what are defined as the two broadest varieties of Spanish (peninsular and American). Noteworthy, too, is the reference to ‘general Spanish’ (*el español general*) which equates to ‘correct’ Spanish, and even the ‘unified’ Spanish which we discussed when commenting on the RAE’s objectives. The vision of standardized Spanish which the RAE holds is extending to include first, much of what is common to the Spanish spoken/written across the Spanish-speaking world, and secondly, many of the regionalisms which are particular to certain countries or regions and which can be termed americanismos alongside peninsularismos. This amounts to a broadening of the normative net in order to encompass a wider lexicon in the DPD (and the DRAE) than might previously have been understood to comprise ‘standard Spanish’.

### **Grammar**

Another of the ‘pillars’ of the Spanish language is the *Gramática*, the production of which is also a duty of the RAE written into its statutes.

The first RAE Grammar was published in 1771, and was given even more authoritative status than its Academic roots might have otherwise provided it, when King Carlos III named the RAE Gramática as the compulsory text for teaching Spanish grammar throughout the education system (see Fries 1989: 84).<sup>14</sup> Since then, the Grammar has been revised and published more than 40 times, with the latest full Grammar titled the ‘New Grammar of the Spanish Language: Global Spanish’ (*Nueva Gramática de la lengua española: el español de todo el mundo*) released in 2009. This version, the first in almost 80 years, represented 11 years of full cooperation and labour of all the Spanish Language Academies, and in the same vein as the Orthography and DPD, its innovation lay in the fact that it was panhispanic in production, scope and authority. Indeed, the impetus for this overdue Grammar to be produced came from the Chilean Academy (*Academia Chilena de la Lengua*). What is interesting is that the resulting Grammar – which claims to be both descriptive and normative – reflects a broad, panhispanic conception of Spanish at the same time as focusing on Spanish American varieties:

Particular attention will be given to the description of the principal American varieties of Spanish. [The Grammar] will combine examples designed specifically to illustrate a pattern . . . with extracts from literary texts, with the constant aim that these examples should reflect the current state of the language, giving special weight to American uses. (Real Academia Española 2006d, original emphases)<sup>15</sup>



There is no explanation of which varieties of American Spanish are the 'principal' ones, nor of the basis on which these varieties might be defined as such. Furthermore, literary texts are given primacy as a legitimate source of examples in order to explain grammatical points, without making clear whether these are purely contemporary texts (in order to reflect the current status of the language) or historical ones too; nor is there any indication of whether other sources (official documents, reports, journalistic items, etc.) are used to describe (and arguably, prescribe) grammatical structures in use. Finally, it should be asked whether the intention to give particular emphasis to American usage is akin to 'affirmative action' in order to balance out a previously Spain-centric policy? What is clear from the Nueva Gramática's objectives is that it purports to:

Describe grammatical options considered as prestigious in European and American Spanish, as well as to adequately reflect the syntactic and morphological variants that a given community might interpret as belonging to educated language, even when these do not entirely match with the options favoured in other geographical areas. (Real Academia Española 2006a)<sup>16</sup>

Here is the recurring tension of maintaining normative standards while allowing for diversity which is plentiful within the Spanish-speaking world. To speak of grammatical 'options' marks a transition from previous approaches which saw norms as uniform. It remains clear that while there is little or no perceived value difference between norms, these norms are based on standardized, learned language and not just any given regional or other usage. In general, the vision of language reflected in the Nueva Gramática is the same as that of the DPD:

Given its nature as a supranational language, spoken in over twenty countries, Spanish is actually composed of a set of diverse norms that nevertheless share a broad common basis, which is manifested at a formal level in cultured expression, and is remarkably homogeneous throughout the Hispanic world, with minor variations between different areas, mostly related to phonetics and vocabulary. (*Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* 2005: xiv)<sup>17</sup>

Although the RAE is widening the net as to which features of Spanish are adopted as part of the 'standard', and where such linguistic features are sourced, it is not as wide as might initially be thought. The panhispanic standard Spanish (or Spanishes?) collated in the RAE's latest publications – as detailed above – is predictably still the normative variety of a very particular type of language user – one who is likely to be exposed to educational resources and texts which are

national or international in scope, with regular access to educated people, books and technology such as the internet. The discourses which take place through the vehicle of international (globalized) linguistic norms generally involve educated, often professional, middle-/upper-class language users. So when we speak of a 'panhispanic' collection of norms, we are still only dealing with the norms of the educated classes of a number of countries.

### **Orthography**

If the DRAE and associated dictionaries can be seen to make up one 'pillar' of standardized Spanish language, and the Grammar is another pillar, then the third is the RAE's Orthography guide (*Ortografía de la lengua española*). Unlike the DRAE and Gramática, publication of the Orthography guide is not specifically enshrined in the Academy's statutes, but it is a work which the Academy has consistently published, albeit as an integral section of the Gramática for many years. However, given that the Nueva Gramática took far longer than originally planned, a low-cost publication of the Orthography was produced and updated a number of times. The *Ortografía* was, interestingly, the channel by which the Academy first alluded officially to its emerging and innovative PLP (Real Academia Española 1999: Prólogo), and this was emphasized even more in the latest version released in 2010. Of the historical role of the Orthography, Zamora Vicente says this:

It is important to note that a spirit of reform has always presided over the Academy's ideas on spelling, which has never opposed that which could produce ease, simplicity, clarity, while of course respecting the correct phonetics and without ignoring the etymological aspects at all. (1999: 379)<sup>18</sup>

An example of this openness to reform is the decision to converge towards a single common term for each letter of the alphabet, albeit 'without wishing to interfere with the freedom of every speaker or country to continue using the name to which they are accustomed' (*Ortografía* 2010).<sup>19</sup> While this innovation is borne out in the decision to rename the letter 'y' from 'i griega' to the shorter, territorially unmarked 'ye', it is less obvious in the decision to reinforce the Spanish peninsular term of 'uve' for the letter 'v', rather than the widely accepted 've' which is prevalent in the Americas. Continuing its traditional role for the most part, the Orthography guide covers the written representation of – among many other aspects of Spanish – phonemes, accents, capitalizations, borrowed terms, proper nouns, abbreviations and other areas where doubt might exist.

## Other language authorities

A number of institutions are involved in language ideological debates in Spain, and have come to be regarded as authorities on language matters. This is even more evident when some of these institutions work collaboratively with the RAE itself and part of their authority comes through association with the prestige of the RAE. As this section addresses the question of how different institutions influence the public perception of the Spanish language, it does so with Woolard and Schieffelin's argument in mind, that 'social institutions . . . hinge on the ideologization of language use' (1994: 56). In mapping out a network here of organizations who have economic, political or other interests in the work of the Academy, I will identify the influential institutions with which the RAE collaborates as powerful specialists on Spanish language matters.

### **Government and education**

The statutes of the RAE establish a number of specific links with the Spanish state: Article 38 deals with the Academy's income,<sup>20</sup> establishing that it is based initially on an ordinary allocation from the state budget which totaled €3.8m in 2011 (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia 2011), the largest grant to any of the various Academies, for example, Science, History, Fine Arts; in addition, extraordinary allocations may be made by the government (as well as private donors) as and when they wish to particularly help the Academy in its activities.<sup>21</sup> In Article 41, the Academy is required to provide the Government with accounts for those state monies.<sup>22</sup> Beyond purely financial links, Article 45 also sets out that any changes to the Academy's statutes proposed and approved by the Academy's Junta de Gobierno must be approved by the National Government.<sup>23</sup> This is an institution which depends very much on the Spanish state for its operations.

The state education system is one domain through which the national community is imagined and by which the standard language of the nation-state is acquired by 'instruction, correction, imitation, assimilation, acculturation' (Joseph 1987: 19). Article 3.1 of the Constitution ensures that through the Spanish education system, all children exit their schooling able to comply with the constitutional duty to know standard Castilian Spanish, the official state language (as well as the right to use co-official languages in their respective communities). Not only does schooling reinforce the hegemonic status of Spanish over all other languages of Spain (rendering it impossible to be monolingual in any language but Spanish), but it emphasizes a standardized Spanish as essential to a student's

success and measures their grasp of the standard variety through language exam grades.

Whereas the RAE's Grammar was previously a compulsory text in Spanish education, this is not longer the case, so the Academy has produced and marketed the *Diccionario escolar* and *Diccionario del estudiante* for students throughout the Spanish-speaking world. As discussed earlier, these presuppose that an education in the 'correct' use of language is a gate through which students must pass in order to progress to higher studies and to develop as a capable and literate citizen. One language critic, the late Juan Ramón Lodares, suggested that education, while traditionally an effective vehicle for the promulgation of the Academy's norms, is perhaps less standardizing than it once was, and that 'academic standards are imposed with less rigour in one of its traditional customers: the school' (2005: 113<sup>24</sup>). This sidelining of the RAE has inevitably led to criticisms of laxness in education, including in debates found in my data corpus in which the RAE expresses moral panic over proposals to ease orthographic criteria in Spanish university entrance exams (*ABC* 13 April 1997; *El País* 14 April 1997, 22 April 1997, 30 April 1997). Even though the RAE and the public education system pursue similar goals to strengthen standard Spanish, the relationship between both institutions has become marked by criticism.

### **The Instituto Cervantes**

The Instituto Cervantes (IC) was founded by the Spanish government in 1991 with the aim of creating an agency for the spread of Spanish language and Hispanic culture. In its first 20 years, it has expanded rapidly and now has 78 institutions across five continents (Instituto Cervantes 2011a). The honorary president is the King of Spain and the executive president is always the incumbent president of the Spanish government, demonstrating strong links with the Spanish establishment (for a fuller discussion of the role and ideological underpinnings of the IC, see Mar-Molinero 2006a, 2008). The IC achieves its objectives through presential and virtual language courses, teacher training, conferences, cultural programmes and an online television channel. In 2007 the IC created a Curriculum Plan (*Plan Curricular*) which specifies a syllabus and outcomes for the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language, and also the International Certification System for Spanish as a Foreign Language (*Sistema Internacional de Certificación del Español como Lengua Extranjera*), a common accreditation system for the assessment of Spanish as a foreign language teaching to which educational authorities and universities worldwide have subscribed. Almost

inevitably, the IC's activities create linguistic homogenization by promoting – and imposing – one variety from Spain, the 'central peninsular Spanish' variety (*el español peninsular central*, Instituto Cervantes 2008) amidst the diversity of the language across the Spanish-speaking world.

The status planning of Spanish in the world is led by the IC, which – as a government agency – is guided by Spain's linguistic, cultural and foreign policy. The hegemony of Castilian over other Spanish languages is reinforced, and although minority languages are options in its teaching programme, this 'simulated' linguistic equality actually reifies a linguistic hierarchy through which the IC controls how Spain's linguistic configuration is globally perceived. This is all the more evident now that the Cervantes has become one of the main driving forces behind the series of International Congresses of the Spanish Language (Congreso internacional de la lengua española, CILE). These prestigious events are co-organized with the Association of Spanish Language Academies, and involve high-profile publicity with the directors of both institutions as well as the King of Spain and heads of the host states. Other attendees include Academicians from all Spanish-speaking countries, academics, linguists, writers, philologists, representatives from the worlds of culture and commerce, and other enthusiasts of the Spanish language. The remit of these congresses is to provide the principal forum for reflection and dialogue on the status, problems and challenges that the Spanish language is considered to face (Instituto Cervantes 2011b). Given the clear aim and the concentration of 'expert' language users at the events, they are an increasingly important opportunity to witness the current workings and priorities of Spanish language guardians, and furthermore, the extensive build-up to the events and coverage in the global Spanish language media means that high-profile discussions and debates about the Spanish language can be effectively promoted and controlled by the organizing institutions in line with their priorities.

The relationship between the RAE and the IC was well encapsulated by former RAE Director Fernando Lázaro Carreter who said 'we are ministers of the same church: we are the conciliar fathers and they are the missionaries' (García de la Concha 2005b: 5).<sup>25</sup> The metaphor references the cultural foundations of Spain's establishment (monarchy, government and Catholic Church), not to mention the historical influence of the Spanish Empire, and shows how establishment ideology still affects the perception of language authorities and their linguistic 'proselytizing' mission. However, the lines of activity of these corporations do cross the lines of 'standardizing' (RAE) and 'language spread' (IC), such as with the DPD which was produced by the RAE and the Asociación de Academias

with the co-operation of the IC. Overall, the IC functions in a similar vein to the British Council, and strengthens the international profile of Spanish in response to the global dominance of English.

## **Media**

In the previous chapter the press was identified as an important ‘vehicle’ for the propagation of ideologies (including the ideology of standardization) through the manufacturing of consent to the norms used and promoted within it. In the section that follows, other media will be discussed, along with some consideration of the role that each plays in promoting SLI.

### ***Television and films***

Consumer studies show that around 89 per cent of Spaniards regularly watch television, and there is very little variation across age or social class (AIMC 2011). This demonstrates the primacy of audio-visual media, and it is clear that television broadcasters hold considerable influence over the way that news is presented, current affairs are debated, and the kinds of entertainment and sports coverage which are offered. The format, structure and presentation of television material all reflect particular institutional ideologies. Regarding the broadcast news industry, Lippi-Green comments that:

[It] takes a proprietary interest in the spoken language. It promotes its own language as the only possible language of an educated, informed mainstream. It is in part by means of claiming authority in matters of spoken language that it establishes itself, over and over again, as an important public institution – and one as crucial as the educational system to the well-being of the nation-state. (1997: 137)

Television producers in Spain often promote a ‘neutral’, central Castilian variety spoken by many news presenters. Furthermore, news broadcasters such as RTVE, Canal Sur, Telemadrid and Telenoticias have already produced their own style guides, reinforce their position as important public institutions. Stewart (1999: 25) writes that RTVE’s style guide – produced in 1985 under the direction of RAE member Valentín García Yebra and with a prologue by the RAE’s Fernando Lázaro Carreter – contained little specific reference to spoken Spanish. Nonetheless, the nature of news broadcasting means that spoken language on RTVE is based on the written norms, so again the standardized written language serves as the model.

Another area of television broadcasting which has merited much attention from verbal hygienists has been that of soap operas (*culebrones/telenovelas*). Gregorio Salvador, the RAE's former vice director, published *Un vehículo para la cohesión lingüística: el español hablado en los culebrones* (A Vehicle for Linguistic Cohesion: the Spanish Spoken in Soap Operas), in which he describes how his interest in this topic was sparked by Humberto López Morales' reference to the 'cohesive influence of soap operas, to the importance that this genre could have in order to maintain linguistic unity' (Salvador 1994: 5<sup>26</sup>). Many soap operas are exported widely around the Spanish-speaking world, and exposure to these can consolidate linguistic convergence in grammar, lexis and even pronunciation. There is also exposure to linguistic variants which can also result in borrowings, or adoption of previously non-native terms. Certainly it would seem that the pervasive influence of TV producers, and the linguistic choices made in their programmes, is far greater than that of grammar book producers.

A final area to briefly mention is that of films, and the way that for much of the twentieth century, foreign language films were dubbed into Spanish. Of course, Franco's dictatorship dominated much of the century, and so there was only one option: standard, central peninsular Castilian. After dubbing was made compulsory in Spain in 1941, the state not only controlled the variety of language but equally its contents were subject to censorship through manipulating the translation of screenplay (Bravo 2006: 233). When film censorship was finally abolished in 1977, the concept of an 'acceptable' Spanish language and accent had become naturalized, and this continues today within the context of a much larger Spanish-speaking world in which there are pluricentric norms. A limited number of these norms are widely accepted as prestigious, and where films are still dubbed (primarily children's films now), the most common practice continues to be the levelling of linguistic distinctives in pursuit of a 'neutral' Spanish that might be understood throughout the Spanish-speaking world. Allowing a small number of 'neutral' and 'prestigious' Spanish varieties represents a deliberate attempt to keep a standardized Spanish at the forefront of media and cultural representations of the Spanish-speaking world. As such, dominant language ideologies are imposed because the domains of television and film 'use language variation and accent to draw character quickly, building on established preconceived notions associated with specific regional loyalties, ethnic, racial, or economic alliances' (Lippi-Green 1997: 81).

### **Radio**

My comments above regarding television as a site of (and vehicle for) language ideologies could equally be applied to radio broadcasting with issues of language relating to formal (e.g. news, current affairs) and informal (e.g. chat shows, popular stations) programming. Several programmes exist on the state-run RTVE channel which debate linguistic issues. On the national Radio 5 channel, a daily programme, *Hablando en plata* (Speaking Frankly), discusses language and promotes the 'good' use of Spanish through clarifying linguistic doubts. *Un idioma sin fronteras* (Language without Borders) is broadcast daily on *Radio Exterior de España* (Spain's overseas radio station) with features on Spanish language and culture in the world, and is geared more towards an international audience and second-language learners of Spanish. RAE and IC expertise are drawn upon extensively in these programmes, which produces two strands of ideological discourse: first, *Hablando en plata* targets a national audience with explicitly prescriptive metalinguistic discourse, taking an approach of 'don't say this . . . but say . . .'; secondly, *Un idioma sin fronteras* engenders a vision of a unified language presented to international learners of Spanish through the model of Spanish used in the programme (ideology in linguistic practices), listing the merits of this 'commodified' language in its varying outputs (i.e. poetry, essays, literature, music, pedagogic materials).

### **Internet and the World Wide Web**

Digital technology and the information society are of immense importance nowadays, and it should come as no surprise that language both shapes and is shaped by the internet. Many statistics show English to be the 'language of the internet' and certainly the leadership of US and British developers explains much of this linguistic prominence: Microsoft, Apple, YouTube, Google, IBM, Facebook and Twitter are all names initially associated with the English-speaking world, even if much of their production has subsequently been translated into many other languages. Given the vast global population of Spanish-speakers, it stands out that the volume of internet space in Spanish is little more than 5 per cent (see Marcos Marín 2000, 2006). While there is an increasing trend towards a non-English internet presence (Mar-Molinero 2004: 11), the low overall Spanish internet content contrasts with the huge number of speakers, but more so the considerable debate that has been triggered. All of the major verbal hygienists mentioned in this chapter have a presence on the web, from the large institutions



(RAE, IC and others) through to the plethora of personal pages of dedicated individuals defending and promoting the Spanish language.

On the one hand, the internet hosts sites in which ideological debate about Spanish takes place; on the other hand, the internet is also the *subject* of much debate concerning its effects on language, akin to Stewart's observation that language contact on the internet leads to linguistic change (1999: 61). While it is difficult to accurately measure language distribution across the internet, Marcos Marín (2000) suggests that almost 60 per cent of internet sites are in English, so it is inevitable that there will be contact, mixing and migration of vocabulary from one language to another (usually from a dominant to a dominated variety). However, this still causes concern among numerous verbal hygienists such as Grijelmo who complains of an 'invasion' of Anglicism and English calques from internet jargon (e.g. *e-mail*, *linkar*, *deletear*, *estar online*, *password*, *pluguin*, *chatear* and *cliqear*, Grijelmo 2001: 221–59). This is seen to be diluting 'proper' Spanish, but is linked to a wider perception beyond just language, globalization as a whole is in fact bringing about a '*norteamericanización*' of world structures, societies and languages (Grijelmo 2001: 221). In response, language purists such as Grijelmo seek to guard the integrity of Spanish as it adopts its own technological neologisms, and to encourage loyalty among speakers to 'true' rather than 'diluted' Spanish.

Advances in technology have led the RAE to update its data collection machinery and methodology for its contemporary and historical corpora, and to use its own website to host not only details of its activities, members and products, but also free, fully searchable versions of the two Corpora, Orthography, the DPD, its current DRAE, and all previous versions of the various RAE Dictionaries via the *Nuevo Tesoro Lexicográfico de la Lengua Española* (New Lexicographical Treasure of the Spanish Language). Clearly the RAE is rising to the challenge of an increasingly technology-literate society, and notably it is doing so with the backing of a number of transnational corporations such as IBM, Microsoft and Telefónica.

### ***Fundéu BBVA***

The *Fundación de Español Urgente* (Fundéu, Foundation of Urgent Spanish) was established in 2005 under the joint auspices of Spanish news agency EFE and the major bank BBVA, as 'two institutions that recognize the value and importance of Spanish in the world and that wish to contribute to its care and international prestige' (Fundéu 2006).<sup>27</sup> Its principal aim is to: 'collaborate in the good use of Spanish, especially in the media, which has an increasing influence on the development of our language' (Fundéu 2006).<sup>28</sup> The media, as noted above, often

comes under fire from verbal hygienists for its ‘mistreatment of Spanish’, and the foundation’s response to this ‘increasing influence’ is to establish uniform criteria for ‘correct’ Spanish so that media organizations that accept its recommendations might contribute to the unity and defence of the language. While claiming that the Foundation is not ‘a corrective institution whose language recommendations should be followed’ (Fundéu 2011), it has developed a *Certificado de calidad lingüística* (Certificate of Linguistic Quality) which is awarded to those businesses and organizations whose publications are audited by Fundéu and found to be in compliance with its style guide criteria, as outlined in the *Manual de Español Urgente* (Manual of Urgent Spanish).

In just six years, agreements have been signed with RTVE, Telecinco (largest private television broadcaster), *CNN en español*, several universities (in locations with significant historical links to the development of Spanish: Madrid, Castilla-La Mancha and Alcalá de Henares) and other commercial enterprises. It is therefore an active player in debates about the use of language in media and society. From 2005–10, Fundéu produced a quarterly magazine, *Donde dice . . .* (Spanish: ‘Where it says . . .’), broaching topics such as youth language, the internet, science and non-sexist language. Now, however, the main resource provided is the *Vademecum* (Latin: ‘go with me’) online database of recommendations based on common doubts and errors. The incumbent RAE President serves as president of Fundéu, and the criteria for correction are based on the Academies’ DPD, and one of the founding policies was that:

The foundation will be guided by the Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts and will accept queries. TVE and RNE have also subjected themselves to the control of the foundation, which will be open to ‘all public and private media’ who wish to be included through signing collaborative agreements. (*El País*, 20 November 2004)<sup>29</sup>

As Fundéu submits to the RAE’s norms, so the state-run media were the first to submit to the guidance of Fundéu in its mission to bring what its Director Álex Grijelmo calls ‘quality control’ (*El País*, 20 November 2004) to the language of the Spanish media.

### ***Style guides and popular books***

Style guides are common among media producers, and approach language use from a largely prescriptive stance with A–Z lists of problematic or unacceptable terms, along with their accepted responses. The aim of these guides may – as part of a corporate identity – legitimately be to shape a ‘house style’ appropriate to

the target market (for further discussion of style guides, see Stewart 1999). It is worth noting that style guides are meant for a professional audience and may not be considered to attract much of a 'lay' audience. However, similar publications aimed at a wider, more general readership are being published.<sup>30</sup> Common to the cover blurb and content of all of these publications is the general idea that the Spanish language is not being used as well as it should be by its speakers. The invasion of Anglicisms and neologisms, injudicious semantic shifts, poor grammatical knowledge and widespread lack of pride in and care for Spanish are recurring themes in these commentaries. On this point, Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman think that:

Just as Bello had justified the need for his grammar on the basis of improper use and the danger of fragmentation, contemporary speakers are constantly reminded – through the press and affordable publications – of their linguistic ignorance. . . . That is precisely the reason why a group of illustrious philologists, grammarians and men of letters are presented as the legitimate and zealous custodians of the linguistic order. (2002b: 201)

Lodares' books argue for the concept of a Spanish linguistic community, and prophesy its breakup if Spanish-speakers fail to use their language carefully and in conformity to the standardized Castilian variety (2002, 2005). In the parallel case of English, Lippi-Green's argument is that a discourse of linguistic inferiority is constructed by popular books about 'bad' use of English. Such books lay responsibility for linguistic fragmentation squarely at the feet of those who speak or write 'poorly' and so a 'need' is created in people's minds for language authorities and guides to help speakers improve their language use:

This followed not because speakers of English were suddenly no longer able to communicate with each other, but because they were told that they would soon not be able to communicate with each other if they didn't do something about their language, given the new technology and the demands that technology put on spoken language. (Lippi-Green 1997: 137)

Style guides, then, are another vehicle of standardization of both media and 'popular' language. The more popular commentaries talk of empowering individuals to be more confident and responsible members of society if they follow 'the rules' of good language use. What both professional and lay readers of these style guides have in common is that they are subject to a genre in which an idealized standard language becomes iconically linked with the desirable traits of those who follow its norms – first-class journalists, skilful commentators, educated citizens or literate and eloquent employees.

## Summary

The concept of 'standard language' focuses on a written form of a language variety, and aims to achieve minimal variation in form and maximal variation in function across the territory in which it has been elevated to the status of 'standard'. Underlying this notion is 'graphi-centrism' and the codification of the spoken language of an elite class, inevitably a powerful class whose authority over the apparatus of state enables the consolidation and spread of the standard variety. Given the inevitability of linguistic change and progress, however, particularly due to the many new and complex forms of communication in the twenty-first century, the goal of standardizing or fixing a language is arguably an endless or even impossible task, and it is therefore more fruitful to think of standardization as an ideology, rather than an achievable end. In previous centuries one could liken standardization to painting an object or scene, capturing the current 'view' of the language and placing great value on that view. The dynamic nature of language change and innovation in the Spanish-speaking world has meant that by the time the 'painting' of a standardized language was finished (e.g. a dictionary or grammar), the 'scene' had changed considerably. In the present-day context, advances in technology have transformed the ways in which language is captured, and consequently the challenge of standardizers – and the Academy in particular – is now perceived to be the maintenance of linguistic unity across the speech community which is now vastly larger and more dispersed than when the RAE was founded.

However it is perceived by different groups, standardization has depended a lot on discourses of nationalism, which have taken otherwise equal dialects and elevated one as the unifying 'language' of a nation-state community. The roots of standardization in nationalist rhetoric mean that the idealized 'standard' – codified and returned to people as a prescribed variety – becomes a tool of inclusion (in the nation) and therefore of exclusion too. Of interest to this study is the degree to which this effect has adapted to or been perpetuated by post-nationalist contexts. Important, too, are the instrumental, communicative and symbolic roles that a 'standard' fulfils within a community, be it local, regional, national or even transnational, as in the case of the Spanish-speaking world.

As well as an ideology, standardization above all represents a process, one which espouses constant intervention to ensure the continued unity and cohesion of a language. This process therefore also has an influence on the associated political and 'fraternal' communities united by that language. Notwithstanding the normativity that characterizes standardization, language

change and evolution means that spoken language resists uniformity and the dichotomy of correct/incorrect. Yet 'verbal hygiene' efforts continue and are applied to both written and spoken language, primarily through authoritative 'mechanisms' of standardization including the academies and the network of other domains and institutions which are the particular focus of this book. While the objectives and practices of these authorities are diverse, there is an identifiable core of institutions and tools (the Constitution, public education, Academies, cultural institutions and the printed and audio-visual media) which serve to make Spanish what it is today and determine how it is perceived, learned and imitated by native and non-native speakers. These institutions perpetuate the ideology of standardization through creating 'pillars' that prescribe language use and propagate the dichotomy of 'correct' and 'incorrect' Spanish, with its consequences of inclusion in, or exclusion from, the benefits of the standard language speaking community. Standardization and its discourse begins in the education system but carries on beyond this and is disseminated through public debates and practices on the television, radio, internet and printed press. In all of these media, institutions and practices, we see they act as sites of ideology: some as sites in which ideology is discerned through linguistic practices (what is said/written as a model), and others through metalinguistic discourse (talk about what should or should not be said/written).

Having ascertained who the primary agents are in controlling and influencing the standards of spoken and written Spanish, the rest of this book will focus on the RAE and its ideological presentation of Spanish through the media. We analyse the vision of Spanish that is constructed in media discourse, and what moral, social, ideological and political values are iconized and supposedly embedded in 'standard' Spanish and its speakers. Through the discursive strategies identified, the data shows how contexts and practices may change but fundamental discourses and prevalent ideologies of standardization live on.

## Notes

- 1 'Como ideología lingüística, la autenticidad sitúa el valor de una lengua en su asociación con una comunidad concreta y como expresión de su espíritu. La voz "auténtica" está profundamente arraigada en un lugar y su valor es, por tanto, local' (Woolard 2007: 131).
- 2 'veiller sur la langue française et accomplir des actes de mécénat.'

- 3 'l'Académie a travaillé dans le passé à fixer la langue, pour en faire un patrimoine commun à tous les Français et à tous ceux qui pratiquent notre langue. Aujourd'hui, elle agit pour en maintenir les qualités et en suivre les évolutions nécessaires. Elle en définit le bon usage.'
- 4 La actividad normativa y estandarizadora de las academias se basa precisamente en estos tres ejes esenciales, considerados como constitutivos de la esencia de las lenguas humanas, aunque, como acabamos de razonar, no lo son en absoluto.
- 5 cultivar y fijar la pureza y elegancia de la lengua castellana, desterrando todos los errores que, en sus vocablos, en sus modos de hablar o en la construcción ha introducido la ignorancia, la vana afectación, el descuido y la demasiada libertad de innovar.
- 6 Todos han de ser . . . sujetos de buen juicio y fama, y personas decentes, aficionados a la gloria de la Nación y lengua, y capaces de trabajar en el asunto que se propone esta Academia.
- 7 La Academia es una institución con personalidad jurídica propia que tiene como misión principal velar porque los cambios que experimente la Lengua Española en su constante adaptación a las necesidades de sus hablantes no quiebren la esencial unidad que mantiene en todo el ámbito hispánico.
- 8 'Los hablantes del español están deseando siempre oír la voz de la Academia. Porque debajo de las críticas superficiales – a menudo fundadas, sin embargo – permanece un espíritu de profunda admiración a la indudable altura intelectual de sus integrantes.'
- 9 El paso que se ha dado es muy importante: se ha más que duplicado el número de americanismos en artículos, acepciones y marcas, que en este momento superan los 28000. Con ello nos situamos en el camino correcto para conseguir un diccionario verdaderamente panhispánico, reflejo no solo del español peninsular sino del de todo el mundo hispanohablante.
- 10 'soluciona las dudas lingüísticas de los hablantes de hoy mediante respuestas claras y argumentadas'.
- 11 'todas aquellas personas interesadas en usar adecuadamente la lengua española.'
- 12 El Diccionario panhispánico de dudas es *un diccionario normativo*, pues basa sus juicios y recomendaciones en la norma que regula hoy el uso correcto de la lengua española. Las formas incorrectas o desaconsejadas se marcan gráficamente con el símbolo ï.
- 13 El Diccionario panhispánico de dudas es un diccionario panhispánico no solo porque en su elaboración han trabajado, codo a codo, las veintidós Academias, sino porque, además de dar cuenta de la norma común a todo el ámbito hispanohablante, reconoce, cuando existen, las diferencias entre la norma española y la norma americana, o entre la norma de un determinado país o conjunto de países y la que rige en el español general.

- 14 This is no longer a condition that the Gramática enjoys; following the Civil War of 1936–9, the *Ley de Instrucción Pública* which accorded the RAE Grammar its privileged use was never reinstated. See Zamora Vicente (1999: 381–2).
- 15 Atenderá especialmente a la descripción de las principales variedades americanas del español. . . . Combinará los ejemplos construidos expresamente para ilustrar algún esquema . . . con los extraídos de textos literarios, tratando siempre de que esos ejemplos reflejen el estado actual de la lengua y dando especial peso a los usos americanos.
- 16 Describir opciones gramaticales que se consideren cultas en el español europeo y en el americano, así como reflejar adecuadamente las variantes sintácticas y morfológicas que una determinada comunidad pueda interpretar como propias de la lengua culta, aun cuando no coincidan enteramente con las opciones favorecidas por otras áreas geográficas.
- 17 Por su carácter de lengua supranacional, hablada en más de veinte países, el español constituye, en realidad, un conjunto de normas diversas, que comparten, no obstante, una amplia base común: la que se manifiesta en la expresión culta de nivel formal, extraordinariamente homogénea en todo el ámbito hispánico, con variaciones mínimas entre las diferentes zonas, casi siempre de tipo fónico y léxico.
- 18 Conviene subrayar que un soterrado espíritu de reforma ha presidido siempre las ideas ortográficas de la Academia, que no se ha opuesto jamás a cuanto pudiera producir facilidad, sencillez, claridad, respetando, claro es, la correcta fonética y sin desdeñar del todo la ladera etimologizante.
- 19 sin ánimo de interferir en la libertad de cada hablante o país de seguir utilizando el nombre al que esté habituado.
- 20 Funding for the Academy shall consist of: (1) An ordinary allocation from the state budget, and any extraordinary allocation that the government and private donors or founders may wish to award to promote the activities of the Corporation. 'Consistirán los caudales de la Academia: (1.) En la asignación ordinaria que se le concede en los presupuestos del Estado, y en las extraordinarias con que el Gobierno y donadores o fundadores particulares quieran favorecer las actividades de la Corporación' (Artículo XXXVIII, Estatutos, *Estatutos y Reglamento de la Real Academia Española*, 1995: 23).
- 21 For example, in 1999, Aznar's government awarded 500 million pesetas to the RAE for the development of its technological infrastructure (*El Mundo* 16 April 1999).
- 22 The Academy will report to the Government, in the established manner, on the quantities received from the state / La Academia rendirá cuentas al Gobierno, en la forma establecida, de las cantidades que percibiere del Estado (Artículo XLI, Estatutos, *Estatutos y Reglamento*, 1995: 24).
- 23 The review of these statutes must conform to the following procedure: . . . To be submitted for approval by the Government of the Nation, the article or set of items proposed for inclusion, amendment or repeal will have to receive an absolute

majority of the votes cast by half plus one of the Academics with voting rights . . . / 'La revisión de los presentes Estatutos habrá de ajustarse al procedimiento siguiente: . . . Para ser sometido a la aprobación del Gobierno de la Nación, el Artículo o conjunto de Artículos cuya inclusión, modificación o supresión se haya propuesto, tendrá que contar con la mayoría absoluta de los votos emitidos por la mitad más uno de los Académicos con derecho a voto . . .' (Artículo XLV, Estatutos, *Estatutos y Reglamento*, 1995: 25).

- 24 Digamos que la tolerancia normativa es mayor hoy que ayer, o viceversa, que es menos el rigor con que se pueden imponer los criterios académicos en uno de sus tradicionales clientes: la escuela.
- 25 'Somos ministros de una misma iglesia; nosotros somos los padres conciliares y ellos los misioneros.'
- 26 'influjo cohesivo de las telenovelas, a la trascendencia que tal género podría tener en orden al mantenimiento de la unidad lingüística.'
- 27 'dos instituciones, que conscientes del valor y la importancia que tiene el español en el mundo, quieren contribuir a su cuidado y prestigio internacional.'
- 28 'colaborar con el buen uso del idioma español, especialmente en los medios de comunicación, cuya influencia en el desarrollo de nuestra lengua es cada vez mayor.'
- 29 La fundación se guiará por los criterios del Diccionario panhispánico de dudas y aceptará consultas. TVE y RNE se someterán también al control de la fundación, que estará abierta a 'todos los medios públicos y privados' que quieran incluirse mediante la firma de convenios.
- 30 *El dardo en la palabra* (1997) and *El Nuevo dardo en la palabra* (2005) by Fernando Lázaro Carreter (RAE); *El genio del idioma* (2004a), *Defensa apasionada de la lengua española* (2001), *La seducción de las palabras* (2004c) and *La punta de la lengua* (2004b) by Álex Grijelmo (EFE, Fundéu); *Gente de Cervantes* (2001), *Lengua y patria* (2002) and *El porvenir del español* (2005), by Juan Ramón Lodares; Amando de Miguel (2002, 2005) and José Antonio Millán (2005).



# Spanish Linguistic Unity and the Global Community of Speakers

## Introduction

The relationship between language and nationalism – both in general and in the Hispanic world – has been well established and discussed elsewhere (Fishman 1972; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2002c; Mar-Molinero 2000a, 2000b). The underlying argument is that language is seen as a key element in nationalist discourse to argue that a community exists at least partly due to the sharing of (what is perceived to be) a common language (Anderson 1983, Barton and Tusting 2005, Herder 1772, Wenger 1998). The German philosopher Herder argued particularly strongly for this link between language and nationality, contending that ‘With language is created the heart of a people’ (cited in Fishman, 1989: 105). Many of the contemporary debates about Spanish have perpetuated this idea of language as the primary factor that unifies a nation, albeit based on differing concepts of ‘nation’ that vary between the overarching level of Spain, and the substate level of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia, among others. Equally in Latin America, a number of national constitutions name Spanish (or in some cases Castilian) as the official ‘national language’, yet in these countries there are also contesting definitions of nation, with indigenous communities vying for equal recognition, and often basing such claims on not only ethnicity but also the use of a discrete, common language other than Spanish.

This chapter explores how discourse that draws on the common bonds of the language has appeared in ideological debates and discursive contestations surrounding ‘standard Spanish’. The analysis of media discourse will reveal the particular ways in which the RAE – as well as other language guardians – define the Spanish language in public debates. Focusing on the referential strategies

employed by language ideological agents to name and describe Spanish is important because these strategies contribute to the achievement of particular social, political or psychological aims (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Wodak et al. 1999). We will consider both the aims that drive and the consequences that emerge from language authorities' description of Spanish as a unified, common language. It is equally vital to understand how language guardians 'struggle to control language by defining its nature' (Cameron 1995: 8) and so the focus of this chapter will first be an understanding of how Spanish is named, conceived, defined and referred to, as well as the characteristics, qualities and features which are attributed to it by those involved in debates about Spanish. Secondly, I will seek to examine the same features of discourse but with reference to how Spanish-speakers around the world are designated, and how the concept of a 'community' is constructed and reinforced by discursive strategies. Of clear interest will be the vocabulary choices of language guardians in their contributions to public language debates in media discourse, as well as the effects of any instances where particular ideologies or discourses become mystified or naturalized.

## Unity of the Spanish language

Numerous academic and popular debates have taken place in which it has been shown how the varieties of Spanish spoken around the world are mutually comprehensible. This basic conclusion is often where the discussion ends, but it is important that such conclusions should be more nuanced; while it is the case that, for example, a Spaniard will encounter little difficulty in communicating with a Mexican, and the same applies to communication between a Honduran and an Argentinean, the reality is less rigid. When we refer to these encounters between people of different nationalities, it is rarely highlighted that in fact this is largely the case for those who use Spanish that is standardized, perhaps nationally accented but internationally structured, and which importantly happens to be spoken by educated, literate classes who are more likely to travel and have access to standardized texts. While this is not necessarily in dispute here, this foregrounding of particular profiles of Spanish-speaker does mean that other examples of communication which might prove more problematic, for example, between rural or uneducated Spaniards and Mexicans, is overlooked and rarely seen as worthy of inclusion in discourse. The result is that varieties of Spanish which are considered to be non-standard, regional, and are spoken by working

class or uneducated people are backgrounded. This observation does not lead us to conclude that education and linguistics instruction are unimportant as tools to access more globally used variety/ies; it is simply to highlight that discussions of what Spanish is perceived to be, and consequently what the legitimized possible uses and domains are for this language, should be challenged, and a more nuanced understanding reached of what is happening when some characteristics of a language are foregrounded and others are backgrounded.

Many recent sociolinguistic studies provide evidence of the considerable variety that occurs within the language across the Spanish-speaking world (see, e.g. Alvar 1982, 1999, Alvar et al. 1991, Castro 1961, Lipski 1994, 2008, Moreno de Alba 2003, Roca and Lipski 1993). Given the massive geographical span of its speakers, it is unsurprising that such a variety of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar exists within what is widely considered to be one Spanish language. Yet there is a particular vision reinforced on many occasions by expert linguists in their own books or writing in the press which repeatedly describes Spanish as being just one cohesive language, and which accords little if any space at all to the recognition (let alone the exploration) of dissenting views. Unity and commonality is highlighted in this discourse, while difference and variety are played down. In particular, the RAE seeks to manufacture consent for this vision of unquestionable linguistic unity and the idea of an international community to which all Spanish-speakers belong. There are a number of overarching discursive strategies and topical foci, as well as specific linguistic devices that are employed in order to produce this ideology of linguistic unity and community. In the rest of this chapter, a CDA of media discourse will reveal these strategies and devices.

### **One common, unified language**

On the subject of the unity of Spanish vocabulary, the following claim is made by Humberto López Morales, Secretary General of the Association of Academies of the Spanish Language (ASALE), in an interview for *El País*:

'80% of the vocabulary is common to the Spanish-speaking world' assured López Morales. (*El País*, 14 November 2006)<sup>1</sup>

Here, the use of statistics to legitimize López Morales's point, strong verbs such as 'assure' and an unmitigated statement of fact rendered through the indicative mood 'is' all point to a projected certainty of the truth claims being made, and these serve to reinforce the authority of the interlocutor in texts such as this.

In another interview in *El País*, the RAE's deputy director, Gregorio Salvador, claims that:

One thing that has become clear to us is that, given the doubts that we have cleared up as well as with those that remain, it is true that Spanish is the most unified language in the world. (*El País*, 10 November 2005)<sup>2</sup>

In the absence of any further evidence or substantiation, Salvador's position as an Academician and authoritative public figure on language are seen to validate and legitimize the truth of the statement.<sup>3</sup> The use of phrases such as 'it is true that' (*es cierto que*) act to obscure debate and block dissent, establishing the speaker's conclusion as ultimately authoritative. Furthermore, the declarative verb form (Spanish *is*) and the use of the definite article to indicate the superlative position of Spanish among unified languages (the most unified language) both have experiential value, that is to say that they draw upon and represent the text producer's experience of the natural and social world around them. Together, these linguistic uses form a predicational strategy which reinforces the positive traits and hierarchical position that Spanish is reported to possess.

In an extract from an interview in *El País*, the philologist and current RAE director José Manuel Blecua responds to this question:

Q: But there are various distinct Spanishes. And the Spanish of rural Ecuadorians is much nicer than that of the TV.

A: Yes, but Spanish, in the end, is one language that unites us to the world, which describes life, love, death and the little things. (*El País* 19 October 2001)<sup>4</sup>

What is important to note here is evidence of the competing ideological views in which Spanish is seen as either 'one' or as 'distinct Spanishes' (comparable to the debates around global English and 'Englishes'; some examples from this vast literature are Jenkins 2007, Kachru et al. 2006, Kirkpatrick 2007, Mesthrie and Bhatt 2008, Moore 2001, Parakrama 1995, Pennycook 2007, Platt et al. 1984). Challenged with the perspective that there are numerous, distinct varieties of Spanish, Blecua first makes an apparent concession that this is the case, but then immediately introduces a contrary argument by naming 'the' Spanish language, and reiterating the view that there is only one Spanish.<sup>5</sup> Along with similar traits which are attributed to Spanish in other articles, such as homogeneity,<sup>6</sup> solidity and clarity,<sup>7</sup> this naturalization of discourse on a unified standard Spanish reflects Crowley's argument that the discourse of standard language has to be seen to be 'offering unity and coherence to what otherwise appears diverse and

disunited' (2003: 84). These examples demonstrate how language guardians seek to ensure that Spanish is not represented primarily as diverse or disunited – characteristics which are framed negatively – but as harmonious and unitary – which are positively framed features.

Another key designation to be repeated in the discourse of Academicians and other guardians alike is that of Spanish as the 'common language' (*lengua común*<sup>8</sup>). However, this term is ambiguous. In some instances, this is used to reinforce the status of Spanish as the state language within Spain, especially in recent debates regarding increased Catalan education in Catalonia, the supposed persecution of Castilian in Spain and the arguments that reiterate the ongoing need for a common state language. Equally, Spanish as a common tongue has, in public debates, related to the language of all 400 million plus mother-tongue speakers across Europe, the Americas and those who remain in Equatorial Guinea and the Philippines. This way of referring to Spanish builds on the point made above in that, if Spanish is to be seen as a single, unified language, it can then be presented as the same variety which unifies all those who speak it. Furthermore, this standardized, common Spanish language is modified by the adjective 'neutral' (*neutro*)<sup>9</sup> by the Academician José Antonio Pascual, signifying an unmarked variety not particular to any one nation-state. Reflected in such an idea is what Woolard calls the ideology of anonymity (comparable to Nagel's (1986) concept of 'the view from nowhere', 2007), closely linked to the idea of a panhispanic norm or 'total Spanish' which is discussed in Chapter 6 of this book.

In references to the common language, social relationships are constructed and enacted through lexical and grammatical aspects of this discourse (Fairclough (2001) calls these the *relational values* of the text). Relational vocabulary (e.g. the *common* language) and relational grammar (e.g. *our* common language) are combined to construct a narrative in which there are clear references to a community of speakers, and in which anyone who is considered to speak Spanish is included. While this is certainly a straightforward claim to make of communities where there is physical proximity and verbal interaction, there is also a sense in which a language community is 'imagined' in the same way as Anderson (1983) proposed for national communities. A language community – though sharing the practical and tangible feature of language – can be experienced first-hand, but is also constructed when considering those speakers with whom one has no connection, and as such it is an 'imagined' linguistic community. A language community such as the one constructed in the above discourse extends beyond the national barriers of those individual nation-states in which the discourse emanates, and even goes beyond those nation-states where Spanish is

official, in order to construct a sense of belonging on a global level. The concepts of 'language community' and 'speech community' (Silverstein 1996, 1998) go some way to explaining the competing discourses at work here. A language community – such as the Spanish-speaking one – is founded largely on the belief that community members share the same, single language, whereas the various identifiable speech communities within the geographical and linguistic space denoted by the Spanish language community (e.g. speakers of 'Chilean Spanish', 'Andalusian Spanish') are 'people . . . who produce, share, and exchange orders of indexicality' (Blommaert 2005: 215) in a more specific way than the language community.

To reinforce this sense of belonging, Spanish is also referred to as part of the 'heritage' of the perceived Spanish-speaking community. Heritage is another part of the discursive construction of nationalist sentiments because in appealing to heritage it appeals to another shared aspect of the national community; therefore, it is significant that in ideological discourse, Spanish is designated the common heritage (*patrimonio común*).<sup>10</sup> Equally significant is the fact that in all but two of the cases from the data, it is the King of Spain who uses this term in his speeches to the Academy or at one of the CILE events. This reinforces his position as a 'spokesman' not just for the Spanish state of which he is head, but also for the Spanish language, with the consequent effect that the shared language of all Spanish-speakers is associated with the historic royalty of Spain and language variety/-ies of that particular territory. Language is indexed to Royalty in the Spanish-speaking world, in the same way that 'Queen's English' is indexed to a figurehead of good language use who is popularly seen to unite the English-speaking nations of the world.

A similar referential strategy is used by the directors of the RAE and the Cervantes Institute when they speak of Spanish as the 'patria común'<sup>11</sup> – a metaphorical representation of language as a common homeland, native to all those who speak it. The allusion to territory is significant in that it adds another aspect of nationalist ideology to the kinds of ideas expressed by language guardians: that language forms the basis of a community comparable to a nation with its set of common ties but going beyond the existing individual nation-states to form a supranational community of Spanish speakers. Interestingly, this linguistic homeland is considered to include not only Spain's close neighbour, Portugal, but also Portuguese-speaking Brazil which has adopted Spanish as a compulsory element of the education system and hence has reinforced the idea of an Iberian–American 'common territory' (*El País* 9 November 2005, as above).

### Spanish as a factor of unity

The Spanish language is, we have seen, commonly denoted in the media as a language which first is *unified* in its structure, and which secondly *unifies* people to be a community through this shared system of communication. The case for Spanish as a unifying tool is legitimized by argumentation strategies which draw on values of democracy, common purposes, peace and global fraternity. This can be clearly seen in the following extract of a speech given at the IC just one month after the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001 on New York:

*King defends Spanish as a 'channel of harmony and tolerance'*

At a meeting of the Instituto Cervantes' governing board yesterday, the King, who chaired the meeting, defended Spanish as '*a channel of harmony and tolerance* when the world is experiencing times of anxiety and concern'. . . . Don Juan Carlos made reference to the new international context, affirming that 'The struggle shared by Spain and Latin America should unite us in these critical and turbulent times, in which faceless forces have unleashed terror at the very heart of *our civilization*. The movement of people mixes races, languages and culture in all countries, and terror is also universal and strikes us with a violence that we would never have imagined.' Aznar, too, trusts in language as a reference and source of civilization. 'With the difficulties currently facing the international community, Spanish must serve to *communicate a code of values*. Let us be mindful that *our language is an opportunity to express the fundamental option for the ways of life befitting the democratic model*. The use of terror simply leads to cultural barbarism' he said. (*El País* 11 October 2001, my emphases)

King Juan Carlos discursively constructs a positive 'us' against whom acts of terror are being waged (even though this was prior to the direct attacks on Spain in March 2004), and a negative, faceless 'them' who are the terrorists. He includes Spanish-speaking America alongside Spain when referring to those democratic countries engaged in the current struggle, and talks of '*nuestra civilización*' based on language. A couched warning follows regarding the mixing of races, languages and cultures that results from the free movement of people made easier and more common with processes of globalization. The incumbent president of Spain then more explicitly associates the Spanish language with the transmission of democratic values. Just days later, at the inauguration of the Second International Congress of the Spanish Language (CILE), Colombia's president called Spanish 'the language of the third millennium because it is the language of solidarity and peace'.<sup>12</sup> Spanish is designated a language of

friendship,<sup>13</sup> understanding, harmony, concord, sharing and unity;<sup>14</sup> a language which breaks down barriers, draws together common purposes and creates a flow of shared values and aspirations,<sup>15</sup> and which – due to its democratic credentials – thereby carries moral authority.<sup>16</sup>

So intense is this naturalized discourse that the Hispanic historical narrative has at times been misrepresented in pursuit of lauding the positive values of the Spanish language. A speech delivered by King Juan Carlos (but written and approved by the centre-right *Partido Popular* government of the day) stated that:

Ours was never a language of imposition, but of meeting, no one was ever forced to speak in Castilian. The most diverse peoples adopted, by their own free will, the language of Cervantes. (*El País* 25 April 2001)<sup>17</sup>

The polemic provoked by this statement came from both Latin America (where far beyond being forced to speak Spanish as, in fact, many were, the Spanish imperial conquests actually wiped out entire populations, cultures and languages) and Spain itself<sup>18</sup> where minority languages have been repeatedly outlawed and persecuted, most recently and severely under the intensely nationalistic Franco dictatorship. The statement read by the King negates those discourses which say that Spanish was imposed on Iberian and American peoples, and in doing so, his words seek to achieve a perception of Spanish as a language supposedly chosen by the free will of people groups desiring to encounter and adopt the cultural customs of other groups. Issues of dominance, power and expansionist ideologies of the conquests and subsequent centuries of colonial rule are all omitted entirely from the discourse.

Explicit contestations of language history and ideologies also take place in press debates, as in this article by the director of the ASALE, Humberto López Morales:

Spain was the only power that Christianized the historic project to legitimize the conquest. *It is not true that language was the companion of empire.* Bilingualism was encouraged. The main purpose was evangelism and for this the friars learned indigenous languages, which they spread and strengthened. The language that supposedly dominated after independence flourished and expanded more than ever. (*El País* 9 November 2005, my emphasis)<sup>19</sup>

López Morales reformulates the existing Nebrija argument<sup>20</sup> that language was a tool of empire, but directly negates it and draws on topoi of history, religion and bilingualism to present a competing, positive interpretation of Spain's historical



colonial project. Earlier in the article the tone is set so that López Morales is said 'review the myths of Spanish in America'<sup>21</sup> and this tone means that whatever follows is then expected to be in the same vein of setting straight this supposedly erroneous historical record on language and colonization. His defence of the historical spread of Spanish comes at a time when numerous language debates seek to problematize (or legitimize) the ideologies and practices of the current spread of Spanish throughout the world.

### **Strengths and weaknesses of Spanish**

One of the consequences of defining Spanish as a single, cohesive language which serves to unify a defined community is that this makes the language an object of special protection. Consequently, there is another ongoing debate found in the media which legitimizes the ongoing standardization process and work of guarding and maintaining this linguistic (and hence social, political, diplomatic) unity. The verb *velar* (to keep vigil, watch, look after) is frequently employed to describe the task of guardians of linguistic unity, not only in the press<sup>22</sup> but also in the statutes of the RAE itself:

The Academy is an institution with its own legal status whose principal mission is to ensure that the essential unity of the Spanish language, as maintained across the Hispanic world, is not fractured by the changes that the language experiences in its constant adaptation to the needs of its speakers. (1995: 7)<sup>23</sup>

'Defence' and 'unity' are also often collocated in RAE discourse,<sup>24</sup> particularly around the time of the Congresses, suggesting first that there is an agreed, sufficiently standardized 'unified' Spanish to speak of (an existential assumption); secondly that there are processes and/or agents that currently present a threat to this unity, or which are already attacking it; and thirdly that it is the job of certain guardians to defend this unity.

The general director of the EFE news agency, Lola Álvarez, lauded the arrival of the Academy's DPD when it was launched in 2005. She claimed the DPD would prevent Spanish from becoming 'a barely comprehensible chaos' due to the 'invasion' of lexical borrowings.<sup>25</sup> Here the perceived threat(s) to the Spanish language are named explicitly, albeit through metaphors. The 'battle' is being fought against borrowings from other languages, particularly English, and especially in the field of technology.<sup>26</sup> The boundaries of what constitutes the Spanish language are purportedly being crossed by enemy troops: lexical

borrowings from English which are deemed to be unnecessary, and for which Spanish words (or English words with pronunciation and spelling following Spanish norms) should be used. To reinforce the idea of foreignness and othering, Anglicisms are generally presented using italics or inverted commas; this happens in the media just as it does in the Academy's dictionaries where a word in italics (*bastardilla*) signifies a 'bastard', foreign, illegitimate word.<sup>27</sup> The etymology of *bastardilla* serves well the ideological objective of othering in the Academy's discourse, reifying the concept of 'our' language with its legitimate terms and neologisms born of Spanish phonetic and orthographic norms, in opposition to 'their' language whose illegitimate terms enter 'our' language and must be rejected or assimilated into 'our' norms. Of course, the themes and arguments above – while salient to my discussion of Spain and the Spanish-speaking territories – are notably characteristic of the discourse of linguistic purism in many contexts.

That language guardians should therefore work to guarantee the ongoing essential unity of Spanish is an apparently logical conclusion to the threats presented in this discourse,<sup>28</sup> and constitutes an assumption on which the role and authority of language guardians is established, discussed and consolidated (I elaborate on this in the next chapter).

In contrast to debates about the perceived threats to Spanish, there are also debates in which it is often described as being in 'excellent health',<sup>29</sup> employing medical discourse to metaphorically evaluate the state of the language. This metaphorical classification suggests that the language – personified as a 'patient' – currently faces few or no problems and can thus be ascribed a clean bill of health. It is an accepted social norm in Western culture that medical experts have authority to make declarations like this concerning the status of a patient's health; here, that authoritative position is taken by verbal hygienists. This excellent health is attributed to a number of factors, including the global number of Spanish-speakers, the high birth-rate within the Spanish-speaking world, use of the language in communication technologies and the unity of Spanish.<sup>30</sup> As such, the aim is to offer convincing evidence of the positive status of Spanish in a speech of high praises for the language.

Another discourse feature is the comparison of Spanish to other languages in order to promote the former and downplay the importance of the latter, as in the following examples:

Anson joked about the health of Spanish: 'so good that it's insulting. The French language has begun to dwindle. Not so in the Spanish-speaking

nations, and that is what allows us to state categorically that Spanish is the second language in the world.' (*ABC* 10 April 1997)<sup>31</sup>

For Fernando Lázaro Carreter, eliminating spelling rules is unthinkable because 'it would destroy the language. Furthermore, spelling is one of the great assets of the language, which makes linguistic unity possible, and which other languages such as Portuguese do not have, producing conflicts for them.' (*ABC* 13 April 1997)<sup>32</sup>

Barcia doesn't let us close the book: 'Consider that what the Spanish language has is a very strong basic unity, and phonetically it enjoys a roundness and simplicity that no other language does.' (*El País* 11 November 2005)<sup>33</sup>

The strength and unity of Spanish are portrayed as superior to those of most other languages, justifying its elevated position in the world, and these foregrounded characteristics are used to claim that Spanish merits special care and protection. It follows that if the standardizing work of language guardians is seen to safeguard the unique and important traits and position of Spanish, then their work appears unimpeachable.

The healthy status of Spanish is also asserted through the use of language rankings which again set up a framework of comparison and grading in which Spanish is seen to be doing better (or worse) than other languages. Seemingly the most frequent ranking which appears in both RAE and non-RAE texts is that which puts Spanish in second place (to English's first) in terms of being an international/world/global language.<sup>34</sup>

It is clear that the predominantly positive evaluation of the language, in particular when being contrasted with other major international languages in a hierarchy, contributes towards the apparent elevated status of the language. The more frequently these rankings are used in the media, the more naturalized they become and the more they are taken for granted as representing an indisputable truth. Obviously in statistical terms, Spanish and its varieties do represent a very large number and international spread of speakers; what is ideological here is the use of these 'facts' for purposes of status planning, to increase the prestige of the language based on topoi of numbers and advantage. This status planning takes place not just with reference to international Spanish but – by virtue of appearing in Spain's press – also with relevance to debates concerning the relationship of Spanish to the regional languages of Spain's autonomous communities. The projection of Spanish as the second most important global language provides an easy reference when arguing for its importance to Spain's educational, commercial and diplomatic policies, and the maintenance of its hegemonic position in activities of state.

## The economic value of Spanish

It is almost impossible to read contemporary debates about any language without coming across representations of the language in economic terms, and debates about Spanish are no exception. This strand of language ideological discourse uses the recurring metaphor of Spanish as a commodity, classifying the language as a profitable economic resource or industry:

*The Spanish language: 21st century industry* . . . It is the biggest industry of the 21st century, our primary raw material. (*El País* 2 March 2007)<sup>35</sup>

Our language . . . can serve as the basis of a common cultural, economic and labour trade. (Director of RAE) (*El País* 30 March 1997)<sup>36</sup>

The intention of this Congress, or rather of those who have organized it, is to be able to integrate these two worlds of seeking on the one hand their own profiles, peculiarities and regional characteristics, and on the other hand, the need for expansion of the language, with more general and international elements so that Spanish can compete in markets, including in linguistic markets, with other languages such as English. (*El País* 14 November 2004)<sup>37</sup>

*The wealth of the language* . . . language tourism is the most clean, non-polluting and prosperous industry of the coming years' (Director of IC) (*ABC* 19 December 2006)<sup>38</sup>

It is obvious that the multinational enterprise awaiting us is the promotion of Spanish in terms of profitability, statistical base and strategic demand. (*ABC* 23 October 2006)<sup>39</sup>

These examples show how metaphors of 'language is commodity' and 'language is business' are created, and furthermore are supported by other linguistic features and strategies. For example, in referring to the Spanish language industry as 'our main raw material', the use of the inclusive pronoun 'our' by the directors of both the RAE (*El País* 30 March 1997) and the IC (*El País* 2 March 2007) points again to the linguistic nationalism consolidated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nation and language have been bound inextricably to each other, and there is an implied ownership by Spain's authorities of this commodified language. As a modern exporting economy, there is an assumption – based on contemporary capitalist economic models and seen here in its intertextual borrowing from capitalist discourse – that Spain as the producer of the Spanish commodity should receive the benefits of the raw materials it supposedly owns, wherever these might be traded. The metaphor is employed to define the

profitable nature of Spanish, that is, 'the oil of the Spanish language' (*ABC* 23 October 2006),<sup>40</sup> from whose rich well Spain 'extracts' a considerable percentage (15–18%) of its Gross Domestic Product.<sup>41</sup> Of course, as important as what is included in the discourse is what is omitted, and no mention is made within the discourse studied of the economic benefit of Spanish as a commodity/industry to any country other than Spain, reinforcing not only the Eurocentric and Spain-centric perspective of the Spanish press (even in an era of the increased global focus of national media), but also making clear the similar concerns of the language guardians in their public discourse.<sup>42</sup>

The commodification of language taking place in Spanish press discourse is one of what Coupland recognizes as the key processes of globalization which impact on language; the others are interdependence, compression across time and space, and disembedding (Coupland 2003: 467, for further discussion of these processes in the Spanish context, see also Paffey and Mar-Molinero 2009). If ideological brokers such as the RAE and other language authorities are able to define the nature of Spanish as, among other things, a multinational enterprise (*ABC* 23 October 2006) and to widely, publicly and influentially promote this definition, then they also seem able to apply the norms of international commerce to language. These norms include unquestioned capitalist approaches to advancing language teaching and cultural propagation from Spain as the symbolic 'oil' of the Spanish language (*ABC* 23 October 2006), not to mention drawing people to Spain itself for language tourism (*ABC* 19 December 2006). These norms also include defining the context and shaping the conditions under which other business organizations – with their particular interests in transnational expansion – become involved in language standardization and its public activities, that is, private business or government sponsorship of publications (i.e. DPD – Telefónica), ongoing projects (*Diccionario histórico del español* – Government of Spain) or conferences (Congreso internacional de la lengua española, International Seminar on the Economic Value of Spanish – numerous communications, financial and energy companies). There is an increasing amount of transnational commerce which takes place through the medium of the Spanish language, and as the number of Spanish-speakers and the spread of Spanish-speaking areas increases around the world through high birth-rates, migration and language learning, so do commercial opportunities through the vehicle of the Spanish language. Spain-based multinationals that invest in opening doors for linguistic spread and explicit policy activities find the largest economies in the Americas being opened up to them.

In summary, although the characterization of Spanish as an economically valuable commodity is made possible through discursively constructing the language as such, the dialectical way in which ideology and social practice interact with each other means that prevailing capitalist practices of commodification and markets heavily influence the tendency to view language as a commodity in the first place.

## The community of Spanish-speakers

Analysing the press reveals further evidence that the RAE regularly and consistently defines and refers to speakers of Spanish in a way which builds on the ideology of linguistic unity and manufactures consent for the idea of an international community to which all Spanish-speakers belong. There are a number of different terms used for this same collective of people:

- The community of Spanish-speakers
- The Spanish-speaking community
- The Ibero-American community (linked to 'the panhispanic')
- A community of 400 million speakers
- The community of Hispanic nations
- A plural community
- The community of nations which use the Spanish language
- The Hispanic World
- Inhabitants of the same linguistic reality<sup>43</sup>

In the different contexts in which they were written, these expressions all refer to those who possess Spanish as their language or who are members of nations which use Spanish suggesting the inclusion of second-language speakers of Spanish, for example, members of indigenous groups in Latin America as well as Catalan, Basque and Galician mother-tongue speakers. The repetition of these terms naturalizes the ideology of the common Spanish language as a basis for a (pan-)Hispanic community, and such an idea is then accepted as a 'common-sense' reality by influential bodies such as the RAE, ASALE, Spanish Royalty and the media institutions through which their discourse appears.

Other linguistic strategies serve to further strengthen this ideology such as the use of the definite article to refer to the unified, transnational Hispanic community, and the use of relational grammar to create and enhance a sense of

belonging. First the definite article 'the' (el/la) presupposes that such a concept exists, and further implies consensus and authority to define the concept:

*The Hispanic World is effectively just that: a world / El Mundo Hispánico es efectivamente eso: un mundo. (ABC 18 October 2001)*

*Speech by Víctor García de la Concha . . . [the birth of the American Academies] ensured the unity of a language that is the backbone of the Hispanic community of nations today / Discurso de Víctor García de la Concha . . . gracias a eso [nacimiento de las Academias americanas] se aseguró la unidad de una lengua que es el elemento vertebrador de la actual comunidad de naciones hispánicas.<sup>44</sup> (ABC 15 November 2005)*

*The community of Spanish-speakers / la comunidad de hispanohablantes (El País 30 April 1997)*

*The Spanish-speaking community / la comunidad hispanohablante (El País 18 November 2004)*

*The Ibero-American unity / la unidad iberoamericana (El País 30 March 2007)*

*The Ibero-American community / la comunidad iberoamericana (El País 31 March 2007)*

*The community of nations which use the Spanish language / la comunidad de naciones que utiliza el español (ABC 17 October 2001)*

Secondly, relational grammar denotes possession, belonging, or a common perspective ('we' forms of verb conjugations, i.e. *nosotros, nuestro, -amos/-emos/-imos* verb forms). It can both align the position of the writer with that of the assumed reader and it also further assumes the authority to speak on their behalf:

learned men of the 21st century will have to be alert in order to prevent Spanish from no longer being the common language of *us all* (ABC 8 April 1997)<sup>45</sup>

Spanish is now the most valuable heritage of the countries and hundreds of millions of people who can say '*we are*' a plural community, open to all and to that which precisely connects and identifies the common language, maintained the King. (ABC 11 October 2001)<sup>46</sup>

The Spanish language, therefore, is consolidating its position as the common heritage of *our* nations. . . . Among *all of us who have* Spanish as a shared belonging should be the basic tools of *our* common work. . . . A historical and cultural heritage deeply rooted in *our* people. . . . *Our* language is the

medium in which they develop contacts and relationships within the vast community of people . . . outreach possibilities of our language . . . our future as a community of Spanish-speakers. (ABC 17 October 2001)<sup>47</sup>

‘The Brazilian government’s decision regarding the compulsory teaching of Spanish in public and private schools is very important and strengthens the idea that we should consider Ibero-America as a common homeland, within its diversity’, said Molina. (*El País* 9 November 2005)<sup>48</sup>

Strongly present in these statements (as well as in other headlines) is the idea that, in spite of many distinctive points among Spanish-speaking nations, there is sufficient commonality of language to allow – or perhaps to cause – speakers to conceive of one transnational, panhispanic identity, based primarily on language, to which every Spanish-speaker belongs.

In the examples above, we see the construction of an ideological concept that Del Valle (2007b) has referred to as *la hispanofonía*, echoing the discourse of unity of the ‘commonwealth’ of *La Francophonie* based on French as a ‘native’ as well as an ex-colonial language. Del Valle also relates this ideology of a transnational Spanish-speaking community to Anderson’s theory of an ‘imagined community’ in that not only is the communion of its many members imagined rather than necessarily experienced, but it is based on a language which is equally imagined to be common to all members (2007b: 37). This imagination – in the sense of an ability to conceive of one’s commonality with other members of *la hispanofonía* beyond the personal experiences and interactions of any one ‘member’ – is fed by press statements in which the unity of Spanish is frequently collocated with a positive evaluative discussion about the context of an overall assumed panhispanic community, as can be seen in these extracts:

The Director of the Spanish Language Academy assured that ‘we believe that with this [Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts] we are providing *a service that goes beyond strictly linguistic interests* and which has *great value in integrating the Ibero-american Community of Nations*. We believe too that this is being realized as the *highest service towards strengthening the unity of Spanish*, yet with the *greatest respect* for the varieties which that *united Spanish* has in each of the regions.’ (*El País* 15 September 2005)<sup>49</sup>

García de la Concha highlights how the interests and effects of the Academy’s standardizing publications go beyond linguistic ends to serve a vision that integrates the nation-states of the Ibero-American Community of Nations (Comunidad Iberoamericana de Naciones, CIN). This political ‘community’ – comparable to the British Commonwealth and *La Francophonie* – pursues



the political, economic, social and cultural development of its member states (SEGIB 2008), and consists of twenty-two nation-states.<sup>50</sup> In nineteen of these countries, Spanish is the official language or one of several official languages, and in another three (Portugal, Brazil and Andorra), Spanish is the dominant language in all the surrounding nation-states as well as a compulsory subject in parts of the education system in two of these three countries (Brazil and Andorra). In associating linguistic processes and standardizing publications with an international political association like the CIN, the role of Spanish is linked explicitly to the successful functioning of the CIN's goals, which are of course framed positively. Furthermore, the concept of a single, unified Spanish language is highlighted and reinforced as necessary, and is represented as completely compatible with the regional varieties of Spanish which are assumed to be derivatives of 'that united Spanish' (*El País* 15 September 2005). Connecting regional varieties with the overarching unified Spanish in this way underpins the RAE's vision of a community in which speakers of the common language or the local varieties mentioned above all constitute an identifiable supranational community. This in turn reinforces the RAE's legitimacy as spokesperson in matters pertaining to the Spanish language on a global level, and allows the RAE and the ASALE a very public and widespread voice in the definition and discussion of a perceived community of global Spanish speakers.

The concentration on Spanish as the unifying factor of the Ibero-American community, and the extensive space given to this concept in the media, tends to obscure discussion of the role of the other languages present in the CIN nation-states: Portuguese in Brazil and Portugal, Catalan in Andorra, Spain's regional languages and the hundreds of indigenous languages spoken throughout the Latin American member states. The consequences of portraying a transnational political unity as linked to just one of the many languages present across the cohort of members include a clear downgrading of the perceived prestige of these non-Spanish languages, particularly in terms of their ability to unite people beyond a tribal level or the nation-state paradigm. Even the process of 'othering' whereby these languages are discursively grouped together as 'the other languages' of their respective countries (and of the CIN), and conceived of as less important, raises questions about the value of non-dominant languages and cultures in an era of globalization. As political, social and commercial movements tend towards greater unification across nation-state borders, and as authoritative discourses reinforce this trend by promoting fewer, more widespread global languages, so non-dominant languages and cultures continue to face the challenge to legitimize their continued protection and value. Often

they are included in discourse concerning the value of diversity, and the cultural (rather than political, educational or social) role that they play in smaller-scale communities. The above citation from *El País* (15 September 2005) also shows one instance of how discourse on total Spanish co-exists with the ideological and policy line which emphasizes ‘unity in diversity’ – another concept which throughout contemporary Spanish language debates has been naturalized into the common ground of linguistic beliefs through repetition in influential media.<sup>51</sup> The phrase itself is not by any means specific to Spanish rhetoric but can be found in a number of different political, philosophical and religious domains: it is the motto of nation-states such as South Africa and Indonesia as well as the supranational European Union, and is a significant part of Christian and Baha’i religious discourse on theological tolerance. By adopting this trope into standardization discourse, Spain’s language authorities tap into what is widely considered in liberal thinking to be an unimpeachable cause: the recognition of unity, commonality and emphasis on the familiar as paramount within a concept, entity or community which may otherwise contain much distinction and even contradiction.

However, it is worth noting that even in contexts where linguistic diversity is acknowledged, it is generally a topic which is backgrounded, that is, given little prominence and discussed in scant detail. Furthermore, this topic is recurrently collocated with discourse on the ‘essential unity’ of the Spanish language, and ‘unity in diversity’ which are foregrounded topics, suggesting that these are the more pressing and prominent themes which must be communicated.

### Unity and community in standardization discourse

What then are some of the implications of the ways in which the RAE and other guardians refer to Spanish and Spanish-speakers? As Cameron points out (1995: 8), defining the nature of language and its particular varieties is part of the struggle to control language. As such, the definition of Spanish in which linguistic authorities claim it to be one language with between 80–90 per cent common features across its varieties means that this common language is more easily controlled by a few guardians. In spite of the fact that regional varieties (i.e. Argentinean Spanish, Honduran Spanish, etc.) have more recently been accepted in positive terms through discourse on the ‘diversity’ and ‘richness’ of language within their respective territories, they continue to be firmly bound within the overall category of the Spanish language through defining their richness as

contributing to the wealth of the Spanish language: there is no discussion of the value of *argentinismos*, *hondurenismos*, and others, in or of themselves. If linguistic diversity were to further develop into stronger regional varieties, this would be seen as a cause of the fragmentation of Spanish. Any perceived greater role for the national Academies or other territorially based verbal hygienists in developing these regional varieties would be to the detriment of the currently hegemonic role that Spain's language guardians have in international Spanish language standardization. It is, then, in the interests of the RAE to continue defining the language as largely one (as in Blecua's expression that 'the Spanish language, in the end, is but one language'), and also to affirm this as a natural state of affairs with no other future alternative than the continuation of its standardization and its unifying role, an ideology identifiable in Juaristi's claim that 'we have no other destiny than our common language'.<sup>52</sup>

Another consequence of the discourse strategies examined above is that by controlling the definition of Spanish as one unified language, a common identity as a community of Spanish-speakers can also be imposed and reinforced. This top-down strategy of referring to speakers of Spanish as a 'community' of 'inhabitants of the same linguistic reality' reinforces what is common to all those being referred to. While not ignoring the diversity of identities and other communities present within the 'Hispanic world', the persistent collocation of terms which refer to diversity with those terms underlining cohesion (a diverse world, a plural community) takes place within debates which are positively framed by discussions of unimpeachable values such as unity and accord. This framing strategy manufactures consent for the ideology that the all-important unity of a language trumps diversity across the Hispanic nation-states, and that diversity should not legitimize any sense of community fragmentation; diversity should instead continue to be discursively framed and practically considered as a less powerful force than unity, and should not impede moves towards greater interconnectedness of political, economic and social life between nation-states.

The resulting belief in the unity of language and the community of its speakers allows language guardians to carve out and reinforce an important discursive space in which theirs are the voices of authority and expertise in matters of the Spanish-speaking community and the language which binds it together. Chapter 6 will look in some depth at the role and authority that the RAE and other language guardians claim for themselves through their press discourse. However, it is important at this point to note that the discursive construction of the language, the community and the guardians of these on an international scale carries similar effects and consequences as the construction of a national

standard that I discussed in Chapter 2. Portraying the ‘common language’ as a perceived unitary reality means that there is a named supranational variety in which particular localized usages of lexis or grammar are either rejected, or – if they become absorbed into the overall common variety – lose their identification as ‘particular’. It follows that the common language does not then consist of marked ‘localisms’ but can be considered a standardized variety: one which has undergone Haugen’s processes of selection, codification, elaboration and acceptance (1972). In this way, a supranational language variety is constructed through panhispanic dictionaries, grammars and orthographies, and it therefore exists as the most elevated and important ‘standard’ of Spanish by which speakers can be judged to speak it either ‘well’ or ‘badly’. If citizens of Spanish-speaking countries use language which contains some clearly local (in this case ‘national’) features, it raises the question of how well they are considered to truly form part of the community of Spanish-speakers, if indeed the basis and ‘native variety’ of this community is ‘common’ Spanish. And if, then, one is not considered to speak the common language variety, will the consequences be the same as for speakers of non-national standard varieties of languages who:

find that his or her social mobility is blocked and may, for example, be refused access to certain types of employment without any official admission that the refusals depend partly or wholly on his or her use of language. (Milroy and Milroy 1999: 2)

The linguistic discrimination against speakers of Spanish varieties not regarded as common across *la hispanofonía* would most likely affect those whose work would bring them into contact with members of other Hispanophone countries or with the international Spanish media, given that the prestige of a common international Spanish would be most guarded in these domains. Milroy and Milroy argue that linguistic discrimination is liable to occur against, for example, ‘A person who speaks English perfectly effectively, but who has occasional usages that are said to be ‘substandard’ (e.g. omitting the initial [h] in words like happy, hair, or using double negatives)’ (1999: 2). Comparable areas in which Spanish-speakers might face accusations of ‘substandard’ usage include the aspiration by Andalusian or some Latin American national variety speakers of word-final[s] (e.g. [en esto<sup>h</sup> do<sup>h</sup> paise<sup>h</sup>], [en esto<sup>∅</sup> do<sup>∅</sup> paise<sup>∅</sup>], use/omission of vosotros, dequeísmo, laísmo, etc.). It remains to be seen how the emerging standardization of global Spanish will classify these usages, and how in practice their perceived prestige will have an effect on the social and professional progress of those who use them in spoken Spanish.

One factor which will to some extent determine the relationship between the so-called *español común*<sup>53</sup> and its use as a gatekeeping tool in professional contexts – allowing or hindering access to these – will be the relationship between language guardians and key transnational businesses. In order to define and promote the Spanish language and community of speakers, language guardians have entered into numerous agreements with transnational businesses in the sponsorship and production of standardizing dictionaries, grammars and the important International Congresses. Given that the concept of Spanish as a unified global language is based on the ever increasing scope and unity of its standardization criteria, the DPD (Real Academia Española and Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española 2005) is one example of a number of important steps towards this. Its producers – the RAE, ASALE and IC, with the sponsorship of Telefónica and the support of ‘the most important media organizations in the Hispanic Community’<sup>54</sup> – intended the DPD to serve as a normative tool for the standardization of *el español común* in both Spain and Latin America.<sup>55</sup> In this way, companies such as Telefónica come to have a role in language standardization practices. Another example of commercial involvement in language standardization is the ‘Recommendations for using our language’ (*Recomendaciones de uso de nuestro idioma*) article which is a feature of Iberia’s in-flight magazine. Not only is Iberia seen as Spain’s national airline, and ‘its Madrid hub acts as the European gateway to Latin America’ (BBC News 2008), but it also considers itself ‘one of the most important vehicles for the dissemination of Spanish’ (Iberia 2008: 58). Its role in promoting a particular vision of Spanish to a very mobile international readership is therefore significant. In sum, the way in which discourse on collaborations between language guardians (IC, RAE, ASALE, Fundéu) and businesses from the banking (BBVA, Santander), communications (Telefónica), media (Prisa, Vocento) and energy industries (Repsol, Iberdrola, Endesa) are framed very positively ensures that these companies are then seen to be favouring and assisting the unimpeachable values of wider and better communication, increased sharing of knowledge and educational resources, and increased commercial co-operation and international trade. What will be interesting, though, will be the extent to which these companies adopt the linguistic norms they are helping to spread, and how access to the global work market or national jobs involving communication with speakers of other national varieties of Spanish – particularly through the companies above – will depend on one’s ability to communicate in what is considered to be *el español común*.

The outcome of this last point will provide crucial evidence of how economic, social and political movements have an increasing effect on language practices, definitions, requirements and norms in this contemporary era of massive global interconnectedness. What I mean by this is that – as I noted in Chapter 2 – the phenomenon of ‘indexicality’ (Blommaert 2005: 11–12) links the use of an abstractly defined standard language with the imagined national community – and characteristics of that community – whose native tongue it is. It also makes a link between ‘non-standard’ or ‘substandard’ language use with groups of people who are discredited because they do not use the common national language as the ideal citizen ‘should’. It is therefore possible that the indexicalization between speech acts and identity markers which occurs under nationalist ideologies of standardization similarly occurs within ideologies regarding language beyond the nation-state. Fairclough (2006: 34) has suggested that the phenomenon of globalization has brought about a ‘rescaling’ of relations in which the global scale has potentially become ‘an ultimate horizon for action’ for nation-states and multinational organizations. I argue that this rescaling is also taking place for the RAE, and that its domain of activity – according to its statutes and publications – is no longer limited to nation-states, nor its activities to those of ‘cleansing, fixing and giving splendour’ to a nation-state based variety of Spanish. Instead, the focus of the RAE and its language debates now goes beyond this to what can be considered a transnational ‘standard’ or ‘total Spanish’ (Del Valle 2007a, 2007b) based on global linguistic unity. If, then, this transnational level language variety now represents the level at which language use indexes a speaker’s ‘belonging’ to a particular community, then ‘misuses’ of language which would previously have been linked to ‘dialectal’ features under the nation-state paradigm will from here on be linked to ‘national’ varieties of language under the global paradigm. It is true to say that national varieties of Spanish and their ‘-isms’ (*españolismos*, *chilenismos*, *mexicanismos*, etc.) are discussed in far more liberal terms in contemporary RAE discourse, and – as I have noted – are seen as factors which enrich the Spanish language as a whole. However, what does not seem to have changed is the way in which greater prestige is given to a particular variety which occupies the ‘highest level’ of the language (now international), and which is considered to be free of features which are particular to the ‘lower level’ (the national variety ‘ismos’). This prestigious international variety – as should be clear from the discussion in this chapter – is debated by guardians as *el español común*, and its speakers form a cohesive international community.

## Summary

This chapter engaged in a detailed, critical reading of media discourse in which language authorities – primarily the RAE – seek to define, debate and reinforce particular visions of Spanish. The theme of unity permeates most RAE discussions about Spanish, portraying a harmonious linguistic unity across the 22 countries where Spanish is spoken, which promotes and is embedded in proclaimed values of democracy, globalization and a common identity. Furthermore, the unitary nature of 'la lengua común' is presented as panhispanic, and so is not considered to be traceable to any particular nation-state nor any of the speech communities therein. Instead, the Spanish spoken throughout this transnational language community is viewed as a Spanish from nowhere, a view based on the language ideology of anonymity. This, of course, is in spite of the decisions on the panhispanic language norms being made by individuals and institutions with identifiable geographical and linguistic roots.

It was argued in this chapter that linguistic nationalism continues to play a part in the discursive construction of Spanish. Aspects of this philosophy include visualizing the language as a 'cultural heritage' and even as a metaphorical 'homeland' itself. Definitions of Spanish which are prevalent in media discourse describe the language as ordered, unified and common across the community of speakers, and this emphasis on commonality is reinforced by aspects of 'othering' in which linguistic frontiers are seen to be crossed when 'their' linguistic forms and uses invade 'our' language through Anglicisms and excessive or unnecessary neologisms. The ideology that those sharing the language form a community is naturalized to become a 'common-sense' argument, reinforced by the inclusive language of 'us', 'our' and 'we'.

Portions of Spanish language history which do not fit with the positive values mentioned above are omitted from contemporary accounts which present Spanish as a language of encounter, harmony and democracy, not just in its present and future, but in its past too. While claims by the King of Spain that the language has never been forced on anyone might be true among the substantial number of people benefiting from the cultural boom of Spanish and language tourism, contesting accounts of history which paint a very different picture of how Spanish came to be dominant in Latin America are hardly, if ever, recognized in the discourse of language authorities. The voices and perspectives of those who would contest the King's version of history – ethnolinguistic groups eliminated by the conquistadores, indigenous communities in Latin America whose languages and cultures continue to be undermined by Spanish hegemony,

Catalan, Basque or Galician speakers repressed under the Franco dictatorship, as well as speakers of less prestigious varieties of Spanish – are backgrounded and invisibilized, allowing the positive vision of Spanish language history to take centre-stage in discourse, debates and public consciousness.

Nevertheless, the continuing and increasing spread of Spanish is a recurrent theme in RAE discourse, and in particular, liberal economic discourse concerning the ‘invisible hand of the market’ and ‘inevitable market forces’ is drawn upon to legitimize this spread. The logical conclusion is that language authorities are merely following in the wake of the language’s own forward drive, and they consider their role to be reactive to the demand for Spanish, not proactively encouraging its standardization, marketing and further domination. Enabling and fomenting the further spread of Spanish is seen as the only option, and discussions of this are framed positively in terms of the economic value of Spanish, its profitability and its metaphorical representation as a valuable industry of Spain.

Finally, the critical analysis in this chapter has highlighted key aims of the discursive strategies employed by the RAE and associated language authorities. These aims included the establishment of an ideological space in which the unified Spanish language of the united Hispanic community is guided by panhispanic norms. Such norms are purported to be representative of all Spanish-speaking nation-states and not of any one territorially linked set of norms. Nevertheless, the standardization practices continue to be led by Madrid’s Academy and largely funded by Spain-based development agencies and private businesses.

## Notes

- 1 ‘El 80% del vocabulario es común en el mundo hispánico’ aseguraba López Morales.
- 2 [A]lgo que nos ha quedado claro es que, con las dudas que hemos despejado y con las que quedan, es cierto que el español es la lengua más cohesionada del mundo.
- 3 The ‘revelation’ of the unity of Spanish is part of a process that has ‘become clear to us’, in the context of the production of the DPD on which Salvador is commenting. As such, the ‘us’ (the Academicians who have produced the DPD) becomes the object/recipient of the action, and could infer that while the *truth* regarding the superlative unity of Spanish may not be clear to all, it is quite clear to the experts. These same experts are those who have ‘cleared up’ linguistic doubts, even if some ‘might’ remain. The use of the subjunctive here (*las que quedan*) as opposed to the indicative is a grammatical choice which diminishes the extancy of any remaining doubts, rendering them possibilities rather than certainties.



- 4 Pregunta: Pero hay españoles distintos. Y es más bonito el de los campesinos ecuatorianos que el de la tele. Respuesta: Sí, pero el español, al final, es sólo uno: el que nos une al mundo, el que denomina la vida, el amor, la muerte y las pequeñas cosas.
- 5 Blecua's use of the definite article implies consensus and authority, and the indicative mood indicates a truth claim and suggests there is no need for a more measured or modalized response. The article from which this extract comes took as its title part of his phrase: 'El español, al final, es uno' (the Spanish language, in the end, is but one language), representing the choice of the journalist/editor to foreground this particular point of Blecua's interview, and establishing an 'expert view' on the Spanish language at a time when press coverage of language matters was increased due to the International Congress in Valladolid.
- 6 Juaristi highlighted the advantage of the 'cultural prestige and homogeneity of the Spanish language which is understood by all speakers, making it a vehicle for effective international communication.' / Juaristi subrayó la ventaja que supone 'el prestigio cultural y la homogeneidad de la lengua castellana, que es comprensible por todos sus hablantes, lo que la convierte en vehículo de comunicación internacional eficaz' (ABC 14 October 2001).
- 7 Fortunately, our language is extremely strong, its phonetics are exceptionally clear, it is understood throughout the vast extent of its dominion: it is never necessary to spell out words as you have to in other languages. The deterioration of Spanish is almost always deliberate and culpable. / Por fortuna, nuestra lengua es enormemente sólida; su fonética es excepcionalmente clara; se entiende en toda la inmensa extensión de su dominio: nunca es necesario deletrear las palabras como ocurre en otras lenguas. El deterioro del español es casi siempre deliberado y culpable (*Superación de Babel*, Julián Marías, de la RAE, ABC 18 October 2001).
- 8 But as Cela himself has said, 'It is good that we know how to defend the wonder that is our common language.' / Pero, como el propio Cela ha dicho, 'es bueno que sepamos defender esa maravilla de nuestra lengua común' (ABC 8 April 1997); Adrados Rodríguez recalled that Spanish, as well as being the official State language, as established by the Constitution, 'is the common language of all Spaniards, in which we all understand each other.' / Rodríguez Adrados recordó que el español, además de ser el idioma oficial del Estado, como establece la Constitución, 'es la lengua común de todos los españoles, aquella en la que todos nos entendemos' (ABC 24 April 1997); '... the *Instituto Cervantes*, an institution that is celebrating ten successful years of asking, at this critical time, that we demonstrate that which unites us: the heritage of our common language' / '... Instituto Cervantes, institución que cumple diez años de exitosa vida, pidiendo, ante estos tiempos críticos, que mostremos lo que une: el patrimonio de nuestra lengua común' (ABC 11 October 2001); 'As the King affirmed yesterday, the common language strengthens the global position of all countries where it is spoken.' / 'La lengua

- común fortalece, como ayer afirmó el Rey, la posición en el mundo de todos los países donde se habla' (*El País* 17 October 2001). Also *El País* 8 April 1997, 19 October 2001, 12 November 2005; *ABC* 28 March 2007.
- 9 'Q. Does Spanish face any danger of dispersion? A. No. In the late nineteenth they thought that it was going to fragment. But back then there was no American literature. Unamuno quoted only twenty American writers. Today we know of hundreds, and there are planes, the Internet and, above all, international television channels aiming to be heard by many people and they all use a common neutral language'. / 'P. ¿El español no corre riesgo de dispersión? R. No. A finales del XIX se pensó que se iba a romper. Pero entonces no había una literatura americana. Unamuno citaba sólo a veinte escritores hispanoamericanos. Hoy conocemos cientos, y hay aviones, Internet y, sobre todo, canales internacionales de televisión que tratan de ser oídos por muchas personas y usan un idioma neutro común' (*El País* 13 November 2004).
- 10 'This impressive mobilization of efforts and extensive participation points to the importance of the purpose of this Congress: the Spanish language, common heritage of over four hundred million people across the world.' / 'Esta impresionante movilización de esfuerzos y amplísima participación da idea de la importancia del objeto del Congreso: el idioma español, patrimonio común de más de cuatrocientos millones de personas repartidas por el mundo' (*ABC* 17 October 2001); 'King Juan Carlos, who closed the ceremony, stressed the importance of Spanish as "common heritage of over four million people", and as "irreplaceable tool to empower the Hispanic community in the comity of nations"' / 'El rey Juan Carlos, que cerró el acto, resaltó la importancia del español como "patrimonio común de más de cuatrocientos millones de personas", y como "herramienta insustituible para potenciar la comunidad hispanohablante en el concierto de las naciones"' (*El País* 17 October 2001); "'One must not forget that the Hispanic community", he suggested, "adds the wealth of multilingualism to the heritage of the common language"' / "'No se puede olvidar que la comunidad hispanohablante", señaló también, "añade al patrimonio de la lengua común la riqueza del plurilingüismo"' (*El País* 18 November 2004); 'Its approval (The New Grammar) is something we must celebrate insofar as it constitutes a common heritage of humanity, which is updated and preserved for the benefit of the entire Hispanic community.' / 'Su aprobación (La nueva gramática de la RAE) es un hecho que debemos celebrar por cuanto constituye un patrimonio común de la Humanidad, que se actualiza y preserva en provecho de toda la comunidad hispanohablante' (*ABC* 25 March 2007).
- 11 'That Your Excellency has preserved a space to come to this institution during his State expresses in itself your excellency's awareness of what the language means as the common homeland of the Hispanic peoples, and of the work carried out in service to the unity of the language by the Royal Spanish Academy and the sister

- Academies that make up the Association of Academies.' / 'Que en el marco de la visita de Estado haya V. E. reservado un espacio para venir a esta Casa expresa por sí solo la conciencia que V. E. tiene de lo que la Lengua supone como patria común de los pueblos hispánicos, y de lo que al servicio de su unidad hacen la Real Academia Española y las Academias hermanas que con ella integran la Asociación de Academias' (*El País* 16 October 2001); "The Brazilian government's decision on the compulsory teaching of Spanish in public and private schools is very important, and reinforces the idea that we consider Latin America as a common homeland, within its diversity", said Molina.' / "La decisión del Gobierno brasileño acerca de la obligatoriedad de la enseñanza del español en escuelas públicas y privadas es muy importante y fortalece esa idea de que consideremos a Iberoamérica como patria común, dentro de su diversidad", dijo Molina' (*El País* 9 November 2005); 'We are some four hundred million souls who share this spiritual homeland of the common language, the blood of our spirit, as Unamuno said.' / 'Somos cerca de cuatrocientos millones de almas los que compartimos la patria espiritual de la lengua común; la sangre de nuestro espíritu, en el decir unamuniano' (*ABC* 8 April 1997).
- 12 'Yesterday the Colombian President, Andrés Pastrana, also attended the opening of the Congress of the Language, where he defended Spanish as "the language of the third millennium because it is the language of solidarity and peace" / 'El presidente de Colombia, Andrés Pastrana, también asistió ayer a la inauguración del Congreso de la Lengua, donde defendió que el español es "la lengua del tercer milenio porque es la lengua de la solidaridad y la paz"' (*ABC* 17 October 2001).
- 13 'Castilian is not superior, but it does always seem to put us on the path of friendship.' / 'El castellano no es superior, pero parece ponernos siempre en el camino de la amistad' (*El País* 13 November 2004).
- 14 'And today, when the world is facing times of anxiety and concern, "more than ever the Spanish language must represent an offer of friendship and understanding, an instrument of harmony and tolerance, and a channel for the creativity and understanding between people and cultures" / 'Y hoy, cuando el mundo vive momentos de inquietud y preocupación, "el español ha de ser más que nunca una propuesta de amistad y de comprensión, un instrumento de concordia y de tolerancia, y un cauce para la creación y el entendimiento entre las personas y las culturas"' (*ABC* 11 October 2001).
- 15 'The Spanish language is indeed a factor of identity for a community of men and women in many different parts of the world. It is a universal factor that breaks down borders, that unites purposes, that establishes strong ties of fraternity and solidarity, and that creates a channel for shared values and aspirations.' / 'La lengua española constituye, en efecto, un factor de identidad de una comunidad de hombres y mujeres asentada en distintas latitudes del mundo. Es un factor de universalidad que rompe fronteras, que aglutina propósitos, que establece

- fortísimos lazos de fraternidad y solidaridad, y que crea un circuito inmaterial por el que discurren valores y aspiraciones compartidos' (ABC 16 November 2005).
- 16 'The common language, as the King stated yesterday, strengthens the position in the world of all those countries where it is spoken. Raising the profile of our common language in international forums, and promoting transatlantic relations which consider the whole of the Americas, requires effort and perseverance. Spanish has something new in its favour, different from years and even centuries in the not-so-distant past: for the first time, and with few exceptions, the vast majority of Spanish speakers live in democracies, which reinforces its moral authority and scope.' / 'La lengua común fortalece, como ayer afirmó el Rey, la posición en el mundo de todos los países donde se habla. Incrementar la presencia de nuestra lengua común en los foros internacionales, e impulsar unas relaciones transatlánticas que han de considerar a todas las Américas, requiere esfuerzo y constancia. Algo nuevo tiene el español a su favor, frente a siglos y años no tan lejanos: por vez primera, y salvo contadas excepciones, la inmensa mayoría de los hispanohablantes viven en sistemas democráticos, lo que refuerza su alcance y autoridad moral' (*El País* 17 October 2001).
- 17 Nunca fue la nuestra lengua de imposición, sino de encuentro; a nadie se le obligó nunca a hablar en castellano: fueron los pueblos más diversos quienes hicieron suyo, por voluntad libérrima, el idioma de Cervantes.
- 18 See *El País* 25 April 2001 'Las palabras del Rey', 29 April 2001 'Casi tres siglos de imposición' and 15 May 2001 'El discurso real y la responsabilidad política' for published examples of when Spanish has indeed been imposed.
- 19 España fue la única potencia que cristianizó su proyecto histórico para legitimar la conquista. *No es verdad que la lengua fue compañera del imperio*. Se fomentó el bilingüismo. El propósito fundamental fue la evangelización y para ello los frailes aprendieron lenguas indígenas, que propagaron y fortalecieron. La lengua que supuestamente dominaba, tras la independencia floreció y se expandió más que nunca.
- 20 In 1492, Antonio de Nebrija wrote in his introduction to *Gramática de la lengua castellana* that 'language was always the companion of empire' (siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio).
- 21 *Humberto López Morales discovers the myths of Spanish in America*: . . . The philologist has published an updated edition of *The Adventure of Spanish America* (Oxford University Press), which revises the myths of Spanish in America (*El País* 9 November 2005).
- 22 'Amparo Moraleda said was a pleasure to help the RAE to watch over the unity of the language at a time when Spanish is the sixth language of the Internet (6% of total), after English (70%), Japanese, German, Chinese and French.' / 'Amparo Moraleda calificó como un placer ayudar a la RAE a velar por la unidad de la

lengua en un momento en que el español es el sexto idioma de Internet (un 6% del total), tras el inglés (70%), japonés, alemán, chino y francés' (*El País* 24 October 2001); 'The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) has undergone a major technological revolution over the last twelve years, which has facilitated the work that scholars are carrying out to safeguard the greatest of our cultural treasures: the language.' / 'La Real Academia Española (RAE) ha vivido una gran revolución tecnológica en los últimos doce años, que ha venido a facilitar el trabajo que los académicos desarrollan para velar por la mayor de nuestras riquezas culturales: el idioma' (*ABC* 16 November 2004).

- 23 La Academia es una institución con personalidad jurídica propia que tiene como misión principal velar porque los cambios que experimente la Lengua Española en su constante adaptación a las necesidades de sus hablantes no quiebren la esencial unidad que mantiene en todo el ámbito hispánico.
- 24 'The defence of the unity of the Spanish language and the obligation to preserve its infinite variety at the same time. Its current overwhelming strength and its wealth, but also the need to pay attention to it in an increasingly globalized world which has the potential to wipe out the diversity and plurality of cultures. These were the main headlines from the presentations which yesterday opened the Third International Congress of the Spanish Language in Rosario' / 'La defensa de la unidad de la lengua española y la obligación de conservar, al mismo tiempo, su infinita variedad. Su arrolladora fuerza actual y su riqueza, pero también la necesidad de prestarle atención en un mundo cada vez más globalizado, capaz de arrasar la diversidad y la pluralidad de las culturas. Ésas fueron las líneas maestras de todas las intervenciones con las que se inauguró ayer el III Congreso Internacional de la Lengua Española en Rosario' (*El País* 18 November 2004).
- 25 'This new dictionary clarifies doubts and fixes the correct way to use new words and foreign words that have gradually adopted into our everyday language and which should be adapted and filtered in order to keep our language from becoming a barely comprehensible chaos. It is timely, because, given the invasion of words that we were suffering, the language was in a considerable mess.' / 'Este nuevo diccionario aclara dudas y fija el modo correcto de usar nuevas palabras y extranjerismos que hemos ido acoplando a nuestro lenguaje cotidiano y que convenía adaptar y filtrar para evitar que nuestro idioma se convirtiera en un caos difícilmente entendible. En buena hora porque, dada la invasión de vocablos que estábamos sufriendo, andábamos con un lío lingüístico algo más que importante' (*ABC* 17 November 2005). Other examples of the term 'invasion' related to English and technological fields occur in *El País* 13 April 1997, 20 October 2001, 30 March 1997 and 20 October 2001.
- 26 An article in *El País* published at the time of the presentation of the DPD provided a summary and discussion of a number of the terms included in the new dictionary which sought to provide Spanish alternatives to the English borrowings,

for example, blog – *bitácura*, e-mail – *correo electrónico*, attachment – *adjunto*, stock – *existencias/reservas* (*El País* 13 November 2005). In the same article there is reported speech which also draws on – and hence reinforces – this discourse of conflict and a related/consequential discourse of protection, that is, ‘*defender la riqueza de la lengua española . . . una lengua asediada por los términos que generan las nuevas tecnologías, que suelen surgir en el ámbito anglosajón . . . hay batallas ya perdidas*’ (‘defend the richness of the Spanish language . . . a language besieged by new technological terms which often arise in the Anglo-Saxon world . . . some battles are already lost’).

- 27 ‘Foreign words, place names, grammatical issues, semantics . . . Almost all have a place within what for the Mexican Gonzalo Celorio “is the standard cultivated norm, somewhere between correct and exemplary”, and with special attention . . . says of neologisms that “many of them are marked in italics (*bastardilla*) to make clear their status of bastardised terms in our language.” / ‘Extranjerismos, topónimos, cuestiones gramaticales, semánticas . . . Casi todas tienen cabida dentro de lo que para el mexicano Gonzalo Celorio “es la norma culta entre lo correcto y lo ejemplar”, y con atención especial . . . a los neologismos, “muchos de ellos marcados en bastardilla para dejar clara su condición de bastardos en nuestra lengua” (*El País* 11 November 2005). Also *El País* 11 November 2005, *ABC* 11 November 2005.
- 28 ‘*Celebration of the language at the Royal Spanish Academy*. The Association of Academies, which works to achieve unity of the Spanish language, celebrated its first half century of life’ (*ABC* 16 October 2001). ‘With over 7,000 entries, the “Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts”, presented today in Madrid, provides clear and well-argued answers to the main questions that speakers have. The dictionary’s great value comes from the authority conferred on it due to being a work of consensus serving the unity of the language’ (*ABC* 10 November 2005). . . . ‘This heritage, like any other, requires conservation and care, sound administration and expansion as and where possible. The Royal Academy, its American counterparts and many other learned and associated institutions do a good job, which is neither recognized nor paid yet which does a lot to support the health of the language.’ / ‘Fiesta grande del idioma en la Real Academia Española. La Asociación de Academias que labora por la unidad del español celebraba su primer medio siglo de vida’ (*ABC* 16 October 2001). ‘Con sus más de 7.000 entradas, el “Diccionario panhispánico de dudas”, presentado hoy en Madrid, ofrece respuestas claras y argumentadas a las principales dudas de los hablantes y tiene “su valor supremo en la autoridad que le confiere el ser una obra de consenso al servicio de la unidad del idioma” (*ABC* 10 November 2005). . . . ‘ese patrimonio, como cualquier otro, precisa conservación y mimo, correcta administración e incrementos en lo que resulte posible. La Real Academia, sus equivalentes americanas y otras muchas y doctas instituciones próximas hacen un buen trabajo que, ni reconocido ni pagado, ayuda en mucho a la salud del idioma’ (*ABC* 18 October 2001).

29 *'The good health of Spanish: ... Spanish is in excellent health and this current historical conjuncture is extremely favourable to the language. And this is due to at least three reasons. The first is purely biological: with over 350 million speakers worldwide in a community that still relatively high rates of population growth, it does not seem that its future is uncertain. The second reason is more important: we live in the communication/information/knowledge society. ... Finally, the very emergence of communication seems to solve an old mystery, the fragmentation of Spanish' / 'La buena salud del español: ... La lengua española goza de excelente salud y la actual coyuntura histórica le es extremadamente favorable. Y ello al menos por tres razones. La primera, puramente biológica: con más de 350 millones de hablantes en todo el mundo en una comunidad que tiene aún relativamente altas tasas de crecimiento demográfico no parece que su futuro sea incierto. La segunda razón es más importante: vivimos en una sociedad de la comunicación, de la información o del conocimiento; ... Finalmente, la propia eclosión de las comunicaciones parece despejar una vieja incógnita, la de la fragmentación de la lengua española' (El País 20 April 1997); 'The Colombian President concluded his speech with a toast to the "good health" of the Spanish language, "the language of life, hope, communication and above all ... of peace" / 'El presidente colombiano concluyó su alocución con un brindis por la "buena salud" de la lengua española, "la lengua de la vida, de la esperanza, de la comunicación y sobre todo ... de la paz"' (ABC 17 October 2001). 'The creativity of the speakers will carve out future paths for the language: The debate on the internationalization of Spanish confirms its current good health ... And the Spanish language is enjoying extraordinarily good health. That's when he unleashed an arsenal of arguments to show that Spanish is not an endangered language' / 'La creatividad de los hablantes marcará los futuros derroteros de la lengua: El debate sobre la internacionalización del español confirma su actual buena salud ... Y la lengua española goza de una extraordinaria salud. Fue entonces cuando disparó un arsenal de argumentos para demostrar que el español no es una lengua amenazada' (El País 20 November 2004).*

*'The overflowing conference program will allow for reflection on the health of, and challenges to, a language on the rise ...' / 'El programa del congreso, desbordante, propiciará la reflexión sobre la salud y los retos de un idioma en auge' (ABC 26 March 2007).*

- 30 In one article by a professor of Sociology in Madrid (*El País* 20 April 1997, see note 26), these factors are presented in a clearly ordered list of 'admirable' points or persuasive facts about the Spanish language, typical of what Aristotle called epideictic rhetorical argumentation (Richardson 2007: 157).
- 31 Anson bromeó sobre la buena salud del español, 'tan buena que es insultante', ... 'la lengua francesa ha comenzado su retroceso. Eso no es así en las naciones de habla española, y eso es lo que nos permite afirmar con rotundidad que el español es el segundo idioma del mundo'.

- 32 Para Fernando Lázaro Carreter, es impensable eliminar las reglas ortográficas porque ‘se aniquilaría el lenguaje; además, la ortografía es uno de los grandes bienes de la lengua, que facilita la unidad y que otros idiomas, por ejemplo el portugués, no tienen y les produce conflictos.’
- 33 Barcia no deja que cerremos el cuaderno: ‘Ponga usted que lo que tiene la lengua española es una unidad básica muy fuerte y su fonética tiene una rotundez y sencillez que no tiene ninguna otra lengua.’
- 34 ‘The Second International Congress of the Spanish Language will need to produce a new intellectual, educational, economic and political map of a language that today, after English, is the second international language’ / ‘El II Congreso Internacional de la Lengua Española deberá marcar la nueva cartografía intelectual, educativa, económica y política de una lengua que hoy es ya, tras el inglés, el segundo idioma internacional’ (*ABC* 10 December 2001). ‘The strength of Spanish is not yet reflected on the internet, where English still wins by a landslide. Despite being spoken by 400 million people – making Spanish the fourth language in terms of number of speakers and the second most established throughout the world – only 26 million Spanish-speakers use the internet and internet content in our language comes fifth place with just 2.4 percent, as the Second Congress of the Spanish Language confirmed yesterday.’ / ‘La pujanza del español aún no encuentra su reflejo en Internet, donde el inglés gana por goleada. A pesar ser hablado por 400 millones de personas, lo que convierte al español en la cuarta lengua en número de hablantes y la segunda en implantación en todo el mundo, únicamente 26 millones de hispanohablantes utilizan Internet y los contenidos en nuestro idioma en la Red ocupan un quinto lugar con sólo un 2,4 por ciento, tal como se constató ayer en el II Congreso de la Lengua Española’ (*ABC* 18 October 2001). ‘That the Spanish language is the second among Western languages does not represent a threat but an opportunity’ / ‘Que la lengua española ocupe el segundo lugar entre las de Occidente da crédito no de una amenaza, sino de una oportunidad’ (*El País* 18 November 2004). ‘One self-criticism made by everyone: the low presence of the second Western language on the internet and the urgent need to resolve this’ / ‘Y una autocrítica asumida por todos: la escasa presencia del segundo idioma occidental en la red y la urgente necesidad de resolverla’ (*El País* 21 November 2004). ‘The presence of Spanish in international organizations must reflect the fact that it is the second language of worldwide communication’ / ‘La presencia del español en los organismos internacionales debe adecuarse a su reconocida cualidad de segunda lengua en la comunicación universal’ (*ABC* 26 March 2007).
- 35 La lengua española, industria del siglo XXI . . . Es la mayor industria del siglo XXI, nuestra principal materia prima.
- 36 Nuestro idioma . . . puede servir de base a un comercio común, cultural, económico y laboral.



- 37 La voluntad del congreso, o de quienes lo han organizado, es lograr una integración para articular estos dos mundos de la búsqueda de perfiles propios, de peculiaridades, de rasgos regionales y, por otro lado, esta necesaria expansión de la lengua, con elementos generales, elementos internacionales para que pueda competir en un mercado, inclusive el lingüístico, con otras lenguas como el inglés.
- 38 La riqueza de la lengua . . . el turismo idiomático es la industria más limpia, no contaminante y próspera de los próximos años.
- 39 Resulta obvio que la empresa multinacional que nos espera es la promoción del español bajo criterios de rentabilidad, con base estadística y exigencia estratégica.
- 40 'el petróleo del español'.
- 41 'Another aspect of the wealth of the language is purely economic, as highlighted by the director of the Instituto Cervantes, César Antonio Molina, who put its contribution to Gross Domestic Product at 15%.' / 'Otra riqueza de la lengua es puramente económica, como destacó el director del Instituto Cervantes, César Antonio Molina, que cifró en un 15% su aportación al Producto Interior Bruto' (*El País* 27 March 2007).
- 'President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero . . . said that the publishing industry is the third biggest in exports to Europe and fifth in the world, as well as highlighting that around 15 per cent of GDP is related to the Spanish language.' / 'A este aspecto se refirió el presidente José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero durante la inauguración del congreso, donde afirmó que la industria editorial es la tercera en exportación en Europa y la quinta en el mundo, además de señalar que en torno al 15 por ciento PIB nacional tiene que ver con el español' (*ABC* 28 October 2006).
- 'According to figures released by the Instituto Cervantes, the value of our language as a cultural platform and a tool used in the business world represents 15% of GDP, a figure very close to the percentage produced by tourism.' / 'Según cifras del Instituto Cervantes, el valor de nuestra lengua como plataforma cultural y herramienta utilizada en el mundo de los negocios representa un 15% del PIB, una cifra muy cercana al porcentaje que genera el sector turístico' (*ABC* 31 December 2006).
- 42 Further research is needed to determine the extent to which press discourse in other Spanish-speaking countries addresses the perceived economic benefits of language acquisition related industries.
- 43 la comunidad de hispanohablantes (*El País* 30 April 1997)  
 la comunidad hispanohablante (*El País* 18 November 2004, *ABC* 25 March 2007)  
 la comunidad iberoamericana (*El País* 30 March 2007, 31 March 2007)  
 una comunidad de cuatrocientos millones de hablantes (*ABC* 12 October 2001)  
 la comunidad de naciones hispánicas (*ABC* 15 November 2005)  
 una comunidad plural (*ABC* 11 October 2001)  
 la comunidad de naciones que utiliza el español (*ABC* 17 October 2001)  
 el Mundo Hispánico (*ABC* 18 October 2001)  
 habitantes de una misma realidad lingüística (*ABC* 12 November 2005)

- 44 Here, Spanish is designated *the* primary factor in the community of Hispanic nations rather than *an* element reiterating the primacy of language over other factors of unity.
- 45 los hombres cultos del siglo XXI tendrán que estar alertas para evitar que el español deje de ser la lengua común de *todos nosotros*.
- 46 El español es ya el patrimonio más valioso de los países y de los cientos de millones de personas que «*formamos una comunidad plural, abierta a todos y a la que precisamente une e identifica la lengua común*», sostuvo El Rey.
- 47 La lengua española, por tanto, consolida su dimensión de patrimonio común de *nuestras* naciones. . . . entre todos los que *poseemos* el español en condominio deben ser las herramientas básicas de *nuestra* labor común. . . . una herencia histórica y cultural hondamente enraizada en *nuestros* pueblos. . . . *Nuestro* idioma es el medio en el que se desarrollan los contactos y las relaciones en el seno de esa vasta comunidad de personas . . . las posibilidades de proyección exterior de nuestra lengua . . . nuestro futuro como comunidad de hispanohablantes.
- 48 ‘La decisión del Gobierno brasileño acerca de la obligatoriedad de la enseñanza del español en escuelas públicas y privadas es muy importante y fortalece esa idea de que consideremos a Iberoamérica como patria común, dentro de su diversidad’, dijo Molina.
- 49 El director de la Academia Española aseguró que ‘creemos que con ello estamos prestando un servicio *cuyo interés rebasa lo estrictamente lingüístico* para situarse en *un valor importantísimo en la integración de Comunidad Iberoamericana de Naciones*, y creemos que esto se realiza como el mejor servicio al *robustecimiento de la unidad del español*, pero con el *respeto más absoluto* a las realizaciones variadas que ese *español unido* tiene en cada una de las regiones’.
- 50 There are 23 members, but Puerto Rico is an associated free state of the United States of America. The other members of the CIN are Andorra, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Uruguay, Venezuela.
- 51 Unidad y diversidad – (*El País* 21 November 2004).
- 52 ‘no tenemos otro destino que nuestra lengua común’
- 53 Throughout the rest of this book, preference will be given to keeping this term in the original Spanish, for reasons of accuracy and potential translation loss, but also to reflect the fact that this has become a commodified, defined model of standardized Spanish in media and Academy discourse.
- 54 ‘In fact, this dictionary is hitting bookstores with the backing of the most influential media organizations in the Hispanic community, who have already committed to adopting it “as the basic reference”, as stated on their behalf by Alberto Casas of the Colombian *Caracol* radio station.’ / ‘De hecho, la obra llega a las librerías con el aval de los medios informativos de mayor peso en la comunidad hispana, que se han

comprometido ya a adoptarlo “como norma básica de referencia”, según ha dicho en nombre de ellos Alberto Casas, de la emisora colombiana Radio Caracol’ (*El País* 10 November 2005).

- 55 ‘Reading through the Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts shows just how many terms inherited from English are used inaccurately, and readers are invited to defend the richness of the Spanish language. But mostly, the Dictionary serves to unify criteria, hence their willingness to be normative in Spain and Latin America, and clean up incorrect language besieged by the terms generated by new technologies, which often arise in English-speaking contexts.’ / ‘Recorrer el Diccionario panhispánico de dudas sirve para descubrir con qué imprecisión se utilizan tantos términos heredados del inglés, e invita a defender la riqueza de la lengua española. Pero sobre todo sirve para unificar criterios, de ahí su voluntad de ser normativo en España e Hispanoamérica, y limpiar de incorrecciones una lengua asediada por los términos que generan las nuevas tecnologías, que suelen surgir en el ámbito anglosajón’ (*El País* 13 November 2005).

# The Role and Authority of the Real Academia Española and Other Guardians of Spanish

## Introduction

In Chapter 2, I looked at the recent development of the Spanish language through the lens of the particular organizations which have played a significant role in the ideology and production of ‘standard’ Spanish. The RAE was seen to be the primary agent of language standardization, and its practices were carried out alongside those of other agents with whom the RAE has cooperated increasingly in recent years. This demonstrated the important point that the RAE is by no means solely responsible for language standardization and the direction of linguistic debates; however, it does arguably occupy a position of *primus inter pares* in relation to not only the other Spanish Language Academies but also the institutional language guardians of Spain and the Spanish-speaking world. This chapter will continue the data analysis begun in the previous one, and will consider what a critical reading of Spanish media discourse and key policy documents of the authoritative institutions identified in Chapter 3 can tell us about first the role of the RAE (and to some extent the other language guardians) in the process of producing and maintaining a ‘standard’ variety of Spanish; and secondly, the precise means by which the RAE legitimizes its role and authority in the process of standardization.

With a view to establishing and critiquing the role of language authorities, this chapter will consider the language guardians’ activities insofar as these are announced and publicized in the press, as well as their reflective metadiscourse on what they do and what they are perceived to be doing by fellow guardians, journalists and other commentators. The focus will largely be on the RAE, and so some of the analysis and reflection on the practices of other selected language guardians will be secondary to this focus. We will, however, draw from

some of the evidence which shows how the role and strength of certain other guardians is closely linked to their collaborative practices and relationship with the RAE.

In order to reveal and critique the means of establishing their authority, I will focus specifically on discourse authored by the RAE in which their activities and their authority to carry these out are explained, justified or defended, and how the content and form of the language they use work together to create strategies of legitimization. Of interest too will be others' evaluations of the RAE, and how intertextual references reinforce or contest the discourse of the RAE. Throughout the chapter, I will draw on CDA of the press discourse which, as has been argued throughout the book thus far, is the most public and most widespread medium through which the RAE is able to make its ideas and activities known to Spanish-speakers and the wider public.

## The role of language guardians in standardization

### **The Real Academia Española**

We have seen how the history of the RAE has led to its contemporary prestigious status of the supposedly 'natural' guardian of the Spanish language. In keeping with its current stature among language guardians, the principal function of the Academy has evolved and differs somewhat from the original motto 'limpia, fija y da esplendor' which, nevertheless, appears on its official institutional crest to this day. One former RAE director, Fernando Lázaro Carreter, went to considerable lengths to underline how the Academy secured its contemporary relevance, on one occasion taking each of the three founding goals and stressing how the RAE actually no longer sought to fulfil these:

Achieving unity is, according to Fernando Lázaro Carreter, the major objective of the Academy, 'which no longer cleanses, fixes and gives splendour, because cleansing would be terrible, because you have to bring in many words that are part of modern civilization. To fix language would render it paralyzed, dead, and as for splendour, sometimes this happens and other times not, because in reality, those who give splendour are the great writers, not the Academy, our aim is to ensure that all Spanish-speakers have a benchmark. (*ABC* 13 April 1997)<sup>1</sup>

Lázaro echoes the view that language change is axiomatic, something which the Academy was slow to acknowledge but eventually did so in its revised

statutes (Real Academia Española, 1995: 7). He makes the further claim that it is imperative to adopt new terms into the language which reflect contemporary society. It is not made explicit here whether he is talking about 'bringing in' neologisms or borrowings from other languages, but the RAE's discourse and practices in recent years show that the Academy prefers to introduce neologisms which conform to the orthographic and phonetic rules of Spanish (or borrowed words which are adapted in order to do so) rather than to endorse what it sees as 'an excessive number of borrowings' (Pascual Rodríguez 2006)<sup>2</sup> from other languages. Following this, Lázaro negatively frames the idea of 'fixing' a language by equating this to its paralysis and death, and finally attributes agency for giving language its splendour to 'los grandes escritores.' In effect, Lázaro appears to reject the RAE's historic motto as a description of its contemporary role, and focuses attention instead on the concept of unity which has become dominant in the Academy's public discourse and which he associates with the necessity of having 'un punto de referencia' for all Spanish-speakers. To achieve this, the Academy looks out for or 'guards' the language so that change does not jeopardize the pursuit of linguistic unity. The verb 'velar' is used to designate this particular role of the Academy in its own statutes (Real Academia Española, 1995: 7) and also frequently in the press, where the agent can be the Academy itself, its director, or representatives of organizations that support the RAE in its mission with financial and other resources:

The Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) has undergone a major technological revolution in the last twelve years, which has facilitated the work that scholars are developing to guard the greatest of our cultural treasures: the language. (*ABC* 16 November 2004)<sup>3</sup>

Now [Víctor García de la Concha] is director of the Academy and oversees the language of 400 million Spanish speakers. (*El País* 18 October 2001)<sup>4</sup>

Amparo Moraleda said it was a pleasure to help the RAE to guard the unity of language. (*El País* 24 October 2001)<sup>5</sup>

As noted in the previous chapter, the primary task that the RAE now sets itself is to maintain the unity of language across the Spanish-speaking world. In relation to its role in achieving this, Víctor García de la Concha explained that:

The Academy exists to bring unity to the language, which can be unified and distinct. The same musical score, such as the Spanish language, can be played differently in Mexico, Soria or Andalusia. The dictionary is the code in which we all participate, so the Academy has to work so that the dictionary is recognized as that code. (*El País* 30 March 1997)<sup>6</sup>

In this statement, García de la Concha confirms the Academy's general motivation to secure the unity of Spanish. He then affirms the primary position of the DRAE using the definite article which sets this publication up as 'the dictionary' which offers 'the code by which we all participate' before asserting the role of the Academy in ensuring that this unified code is recognized as the one shared by Spanish-speakers. Once again we see that, even if Spanish is recognized to have multiple distinctive varieties and expressions, these are brought together for the benefit of Spanish-speakers worldwide by the RAE and ASALE in a way that attributes authority to these publications.

The RAE's primacy in defining and promoting linguistic unity is reinforced by two particular metaphors that appear in *ABC* which refer to the RAE's Madrid head office as 'the engine room of the language' and 'the spiritual centre where language grows' (*ABC* 16 November 2004).<sup>7</sup> The industrial connotations of the first metaphor place responsibility for working and creating the language firmly with the RAE and suggest one aspect of the public perception of the RAE's work and importance. The second metaphor echoes Herderian discourse which views language as the spirit of a national community: the Academy as the 'spiritual centre' is seen to be the hub of Spanish where linguistic unity indexes a sense of belonging to an overarching community. For Herder, this community was realized by the nation-state, whereas in the case of Spanish in its contemporary context, the community of speakers transcends national borders. Indeed, the so-called community encompasses countries in which, while an idealized homogenous language does represent a common factor of identity, there is also 'a complex set of disparate loyalties' (Bugel 2006: 22) that do not figure in the discursive construction of linguistic homogeneity and unity. These loyalties are subsumed within the notion of the 'Spanish-speaking community'.

Beside the array of non-linguistic loyalties present within the Spanish-speaking world, there are linguistic distinctives – evolving features of language which come to represent territorially marked items and usages (*chilenismos*, *venezolanismos*, etc.) – which become points of distinction and pride and consequently give rise to linguistic loyalties. The late Francisco Ayala, who was a famed writer and RAE member, remarked that when it came to managing the evolution of Spanish, 'to calibrate, measure and record the language is precisely the task of our Academies' (*El País* 18 November 2004).<sup>8</sup> The sense here is that all the Academies participate in the task of 'gatekeeping' Spanish, ensuring that any changes, neologisms, borrowings, and so on are weighed up, measured, registered and come to form part of the pillars of Spanish in the Academies' Orthography, Dictionary and Grammar publications. Consequently, language change is not so

much subject to mere evolution as to a degree of engineering in pursuit of the homogenization of the common language.

Press discourse reveals that even if the Academies are in some ways seen to be the agents who monitor, control and manage linguistic change, there is an emphasis in the media on the descriptive – rather than prescriptive – aspect of the Academies' work. Angel Martín Municio of the RAE stated plainly that in order for the DRAE to be kept up-to-date, the Academy 'only has to pick up the language that people use' (*ABC* 11 April 1997).<sup>9</sup> Insinuated here is an uncharacteristically passive role for the RAE in that it is seen only to collect the language already in use and commit it to paper in the form of dictionaries and other guides. López Morales corroborates this view when he comments on the debate around the singular and plural of the Spanish borrowed term *talibán*, leading the journalist of the article to frame his comments with the statement that:

One of the Academy's roles is like that of a notary, to record and authenticate what is happening and what users are saying. Lopez Morales is confident that in the future, the Royal Academy's Dictionary will record '*talibán*' as singular and '*talibanes*' as plural. (*ABC* 12 October 2001)<sup>10</sup>

Once again, the issue of agency and responsibility for language change and innovation is placed with users who in this instance are positioned as separate from the Academy itself. The RAE's responsibility, as the metaphor of a 'linguistic notary public' suggests, is to register what is actually happening among ordinary Spanish-speakers on the street. Víctor García de la Concha's assessment is that the work of the Academy and its resulting DRAE is to be a mirror of spoken Spanish:

Luis Herrero complained about the Academy's swift acceptance of the word *guay* (cool). The director of the RAE responded that it is a term that people use and that the Dictionary should be a mirror of the language that people speak, not a selection of terms preferred by the Academicians. (*El País* 19 October 2001)<sup>11</sup>

As well as positively stating the role of the RAE, García de la Concha also specifies negatively what its role must not be, and that is to select terms to appear in the Dictionary according to the preferences of its members. This apparently assumes that Academicians are able to make disinterested choices about what should be included in the Spanish lexicon according to objective guiding principles or criteria, and that subjective ideologies of language play no part and are not



brought to the table when deciding which aspects of 'the language that people speak' to include in the dictionary's content. However, when dealing with the RAE and ASALE's proposed new Grammar, García de la Concha talks of how it will serve to 'recommend certain uses when it is considered that these form part of standard general educated language' (*El País* 18 October 2001).<sup>12</sup> Referring to a 'standard general educated language' – which, as a standardized norm is based on the deliberations and publications of the Academies and others – surely negates the possibility of their role being merely to mirror and capture the language that is spoken (always vaguely referenced by the passive 'se habla'). In an article for the *Fundéu* magazine – another language guarding organization over which he then presided – García de la Concha reiterates the relationship between the Spanish language, its speakers and the Academies:

Because it is well known that the standard is not produced by Academicians but by the speakers. The Academy and the Association of Academies play a notarial role: they keep their eyes and ears open to see and hear what Spanish-speaking people, at a moderately cultured level, consider to be right or wrong, educated, colloquial or vulgar. And they fix it within the body of the Spanish language, the changing living organism that it is. (2008: 1)<sup>13</sup>

We see here the intertextual reference to the metaphor of 'notary public', before García de la Concha modifies the claim that the Academy registers what Spanish-speakers' actual usage is, to claim instead that they register what those speakers consider to be correct, incorrect and generally desirable. It is first and foremost the speakers themselves – according to García de la Concha – who decide what is correct. This appears to absolve the Academies of their traditional responsibility for fixing the norms of the language, and places responsibility for the creation of norms with Spanish speakers. What the Academies appear to fix are these 'speaker-generated norms', and by the Academies fixing them, they are seen to enter into the accepted system that is the Spanish language.

To make recommendations, to standardize and to homogenize the status of language usages to educated/cultured language all involve far more than a mere mirror-like reflection of what is seen and heard: they signify the evaluation, selection, adaptation and recommendation of particular aspects of the 'image' of language, and the consequent rejection and stigmatization of elements which become non-standard, non-general and unrefined.

In fulfilling this role, the RAE not only merely describes how the Spanish language is used but does in fact describe how it should be used, and it is clear that language prescription reflects personal, class, social and political interests. The

present director of the RAE, José Manuel Blecua, demonstrates in the following interview extract how the criteria for language management are deeply rooted in historical and socio-political contexts:

‘The dictionary of the Royal Academy reflects a consolidated language’, says Blecua who offers a very graphic example to readers. ‘During the period of transition to democracy in Spain, cars were called milk-carts because they were all white. If these words had been accepted, it would have been necessary to change them again. Words should be consolidated over time before they enter the dictionary’. But language acknowledges neither trends nor legislation. The debates about sexism or the acceptance of the word marriage to refer to same-sex couples are matters of legislation, the dictionary is specifically limited to ‘providing an account of valid meanings’. (*El País* 23 March 2007)<sup>14</sup>

Blecua notes the example of the term ‘lechera’ (milk-cart) and how its use was historically specific, before then using this as the basis of a strategy to argue that the inclusion of words in the DRAE is not simply a matter of reflecting current usage, but Academicians also judge whether these have been sufficiently consolidated. Moreover, the inclusion in or exclusion from the DRAE is a highly visible marker of how valid (and consequently invalid) particular terms are.

So in spite of the Academies’ claims to the contrary, both the ‘normative metalinguistic practices’ (Cameron 1995: 237) of producing language guides, dictionaries, and so forth and also the institution’s ‘explicit metalinguistic discourse’ (Woolard 1998: 9–11) reveal a prescriptive rather than merely descriptive role in language matters. As I noted in Chapter 3, so-called descriptive publications – though being presented for public consumption – are essentially still prescriptive. They do more than describe language; they discursively construct and create the belief that there is (and ought to be) a common and ideal code (here, the *lengua culta general estándar*) to which members of the Spanish-speaking ‘community’ should have universal access. Given this recognition that the Academies do not merely register what is spoken but what is both spoken *and valid*, we can see the powerful position of the Academies in pronouncing what they consider to be acceptable terms for use in the prestigious *lengua culta* which has come to form the basic framework of the panhispanic standard and ‘total Spanish’ (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, in defining and deciding on terminology before agreeing or opposing its entry into the Dictionary, Grammar and Orthography guides, it is crucial to acknowledge the Academies’ authority to attribute meaning (i.e. to establish valid meaning) to

terms. In so doing, they fulfil a function that is extremely powerful, because as Francisco Ayala commented at the Fourth CILE in Argentina, 'naming things is to transform their condition, to give them a new consistency, that is, basically to invent them, and create them' (*El País* 18 November 2004).<sup>15</sup> If the ultimate effect of nomenclature (through standardization) is to potentially transform, invent and create language and meaning, then this is certainly a form of language control. This is not a problem per se because standardization – as I have already stated – is not necessarily wrong, and the other extreme of linguistic disorder is not to anyone's advantage. However, there are interests, ideas and conditions of production and dissemination in the ideology and process of standardization which must be recognized and not simply ignored or naturalized.

In pursuit of their claim to maintain linguistic unity by watching over the changes that Spanish is experiencing in the modern world, the Academies reflect the everyday language usage of Spanish-speakers but also control language change through defining what constitutes the prestigious 'standard general educated language'. Arguably the most visible way that Academicians fulfil this role is through consistently publishing letters, articles and commentaries in the press, which involves their making proactive, as well as reactive, comments and analysis on a wide variety of language-related issues. For example, when the Nobel Literature prize winner Gabriel García Márquez called for the Spanish spelling system to be significantly reformed and simplified, there was a flurry of activity in the press in which members of the Spanish Academy gave their overwhelming negative and dismissive responses to García Márquez's suggestions. Academicians systematically discredited García Márquez himself as knowing little about linguistics and – taking the argument beyond linguistics – being typical of those who do not submit to any kind of norms; his comments were also discredited as exaggerated, nonsense, a joke and even magical realism (*ABC* 9 April 1997).<sup>16</sup> In providing such concentrated public commentary, the RAE achieved three things: it reinforced its commitment to the Orthographic status quo for which it was responsible, it demonstrated how jealously it guards its position of author and guardian of the Orthography and general standardization of Spanish, and it reinforced its own role as the body with responsibility for producing and defending the rules of Spanish spelling. It also re-established very quickly who has the right to make these suggestions, who provides legitimate and authoritative commentary on them, and who the rightful arbiter is in defining the shape of the Spanish language. Through their regular interventions in Spain's press, the Academicians also offer opinions on the responsibilities of the education system, the press itself and the status of

Spanish in the world, all of which are written and framed in an authoritative manner. Recent debates surrounding language in education have, for example, included the RAE's pronouncements on the meticulous application of spelling standards for university entrance exams,<sup>17</sup> the lamentable withdrawal of Latin from the Spanish school curriculum,<sup>18</sup> and the failure to deal with the 'dreadful' state of Spanish language education.<sup>19</sup> Other professions such as journalists are often reminded of their responsibility to use 'correct' Spanish and that the RAE pays particular attention to their writings in the media.<sup>20</sup> These writings are both descriptive and prescriptive commentaries in that they outline the situation in question (as the RAE sees it) and the particular position of language guardians regarding the situation, and then through the prevalent use of imperative modal verbs (must, should, it is essential to . . .), state their view of what should be the case for Spanish-speakers.

The idea that the RAE, rather than being the master of the language is primarily a servant of the Spanish-speaking world is one which occurs and is emphasized frequently, contributing to the justification of its interventions. In different articles, the object of the Academy's service is represented as the unity of the language, the language more generally, the public and the Spanish nation. Víctor García de la Concha, in his opening address to the Second CILE, thanks the president of Mexico (as patron of the previous conference) for recognizing the language as a common factor of identity for Spanish-speakers around the world and also for recognizing the work of the Academies in serving this unity.<sup>21</sup> Appealing to such irreproachable values as unity and the supposed 'common homeland' of Spanish, García de la Concha ensures the reader will associate the Academies with the pursuit of these laudable principles. Some years later, when Víctor García de la Concha gave an acceptance speech on the award of the Premio de Valores Humanos to the RAE, he recalled the founding mission of the Academy:

When, almost three hundred years ago, His Majesty King Felipe V signed the 'Seal of Approval and Royal protection for the Academy', he repeatedly stressed that it was founded with the objective of 'serving the public good and honour of the nation, by serving the Spanish language'. . . . The Royal Spanish Academy was born and driven forwards by a group of enlightened innovators, renovators, who thought of the people and wanted to do everything for the people and with the people. (García de la Concha, *ABC* 15 November 2005)<sup>22</sup>

In the first part of this extract, the RAE director refers to the Academy's mandate to serve 'the public good' which is then collocated with 'the honour of the

nation'; these are then placed in relation to the gerund 'serving' indicating that serving the common good and the honour of the nation is achieved by serving the language. This sets the RAE's mission as subservient to the 'higher' cause of national honour, although García de la Concha's immediate retextualization of the mission in the second part focuses more on the desire of the founding Academicians to serve the people. The repetition of 'el pueblo' three times adds further emphasis here and is somewhat reminiscent of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address ('government of the people, by the people, for the people', (Lincoln 1863)). García de la Concha concludes his speech by saying that:

The Royal Spanish Academy expresses its heartfelt thanks for this prize, and we wish to say that we accept it as not just as a recognition, but as a stimulus to better fulfil its founding objective every day: 'serve the public good and honour of the nation, by serving the Castilian or Spanish language.' (ABC 15 November 2005)<sup>23</sup>

García de la Concha uses a metonym here, referring to the overarching RAE as a substitute for himself. In doing so, he obscures his own agency in accepting the prize for the Academy and more importantly commits the institution once again to the pursuit of its founding mission which he states at the end of the extract. One of the effects here is that he reiterates the link between the Academy and 'the nation' which – if this refers to Spain – appears misaligned with the more international and panhispanic discourse of recent years. However, just prior to this last extract, García de la Concha refers to a motion passed among the members of ASALE which sought to congratulate the King of Spain on 30 years of his reign during which he had – they argued – become 'creator and constant model of harmony not only between Spaniards but also among all Spanish-speaking peoples (ABC 15 November 2005).<sup>24</sup> At the end of the above extract, García de la Concha also re-entextualizes the reference to 'the Castilian language' by synonymizing it with 'Spanish', thus taking into account those Spanish-speaking nation-states that name the language Spanish (*español*) rather than Castilian (*castellano*), and therefore producing another example of metonymy.

Given these considerations, it is possible that in building a vision of the Academy's service to the people (Spanish-speakers) and in making reference to the King of the Spanish nation as also the architect of panhispanic concord, the 'nation' could well be synonymous with the discursively constructed community of Spanish-speakers discussed in the previous chapter. This would then set the role of the RAE as truly international and panhispanic in its authority and scope. On the other hand, even if 'la Nación' is not being rescaled

to denote the Spanish-speaking ‘community’, there still remains a very clear link in the eyes of the RAE between its activities and those of the Spanish state, as evidenced by García de la Concha’s claim that, ‘My trips are in effect state visits’ (*ABC* 17 October 2001).<sup>25</sup> In the desire to be seen as serving the Spanish language, the RAE’s discourse actually constructs a rather more powerful role for the organization than that of a servant. It promotes its role as guardian of the unity of Spanish across the Spanish-speaking world, with the King of Spain seen to exercise the role of guarantor for this unity. The RAE’s director, while acting as a figurehead for both the Spanish Academy and also the Association of Academies, suggests that the overseas travel he embarks on can be interpreted as serving the Spanish state, which brings into question the interests and ultimate goals that are met by the RAE’s international activities. Does the RAE act in service of the language for the benefit of Spanish-speakers – to include all multilingual citizens of states where Spanish is official? Or could there exist a conflict of interests through explicitly linking the activities of the RAE with the service of one particular nation-state, contradicting as this does the otherwise panhispanic direction in which the institution’s recent developments have been heading?

### **The King of Spain**

There is evidence in the practices of language guardians and the press coverage of these that certain other guardians and authorities (political, commercial, cultural, media) assume particular roles in their collaborative practices and relationship with the RAE. The first and perhaps most visible of the other language guardians is the King of Spain who is, by virtue of his role, constantly given public space to act as a ‘voice’ for all manner of public causes. Language is manifestly one of the topics about which he regularly speaks, and the resulting discourse is a frequent feature of the Spanish press and in particular of the two representative publications on which this study concentrates, *El País* and *ABC*. The previous chapter showed how the King’s speeches about the unity of Spanish and its ‘community’ of speakers among Spanish-speakers make him something of a ‘spokesperson’ for the Spanish-speaking world. Such a designation is bolstered by the following extract from a speech by Víctor García de la Concha showing the eminent regard in which the RAE and ASALE hold the King:

His Majesty has been and is the inspiration and generous advocate of the Panhispanic Language Policy of the Academy and the Academies. I ventured to add that our King exercised the highest role of constitutional patron

not only for our Academy, but also for the Association. The next day, at a workshop held at our Felipe IV building, the representative of Colombia took the floor to present a motion that was enthusiastically approved by everyone, congratulating His Majesty on the thirtieth anniversary of his reign – and I quote – ‘for being the creator and constant model of harmony not only between Spaniards but also among all Spanish-speaking peoples’. (ABC 15 November 2005)<sup>26</sup>

The role of King Juan Carlos is portrayed not simply as head of the Spanish state and therefore guarantor of national political unity, but also as the architect and reference of unity between all Spanish-speakers. Other than noting the presupposition of unity and community on which this ‘role’ for the King rests, it is interesting to note that agency for the foundation of the PLP is assigned to the King. That the King is responsible for the birth of the panhispanic ideal – let alone this particular linguistic policy – is highly doubtful; this attribution obfuscates both the historical roots of this ideology in the attempts to maintain spiritual and political bonds of ‘hispanidad’ between Spain and the post-independence Latin American states of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2002a), and also the agency of the Academies and associated commercial enterprises in the design, promotion and execution of the policy (see Chapter 6; also Paffey and Mar-Molinero 2009).

Of course, as the head of a constitutional monarchy, the King’s public speeches are largely written for him by government ministries (e.g. the polemical ‘not a language of imposition’ speech, *El País* 25 April 2001) and similar agencies such as the Academies. Consequently, in the case of the King’s support for the PLP as expressed in various speeches, these will have been written by the RAE/ASALE and reflect these organizations’ ideologies and practices. In describing the King as the driving force of the PLP, García de la Concha seems to be exploiting the political impartiality, popularity and symbolic authority of the King to legitimate the Academies’ policies.

### **The Instituto Cervantes**

The IC, with its mission to assist the global spread of the Spanish language, also has the King of Spain as its honorary president as well as the incumbent head of the Spanish government as its Executive President, and therefore receives both the economic support and the symbolic prestige of the Spanish state and establishment. This is important when considering how the Cervantes and the

RAE are cited recurrently in media discourse as language authorities in the same articles on, for example, the launch and conclusion of the CILEs,<sup>27</sup> in special supplements on language matters,<sup>28</sup> and – as might be reasonably expected – on the launch of joint projects and publications.<sup>29</sup> In addition to its role in the spread of Spanish, the IC contributes towards the standardization of the language. Two examples of how the IC does this are: first, its selection and promotion of the central peninsular variety of Spanish as a ‘pure’ model for its online *Aula virtual* and international courses; and second, its joint efforts with the RAE to provide standard answers to linguistic doubts in the DPD. In relation to this second point, the former director of the IC (and Spanish Minister of Culture from 2007–9) César Antonio Molina explained that:

Then there are the responsibilities of the *Instituto Cervantes*, which has worked very closely [with the RAE] in the development of the dictionary which is also an essential tool. . . . The task that the Cervantes now faces is to unify the guidelines, establish common standards in language teaching, establish rules to ensure that its transmission is not spoiled by distorting noises. A dictionary that addresses such doubts is essential to this task. (*El País* 19 November 2004)<sup>30</sup>

It is clear then, that not only does the Cervantes promote the standardization of the language itself, but also the curricula and guidelines by which it is taught around the world (Chapter 6 includes a discussion of the IC’s common curriculum and accreditation system). What is equally clear is that Molina sees the benefit of its co-operation with the RAE and ASALE that ‘with this Dictionary, we will be able to teach the same Spanish anywhere’ (*ABC* 19 November 2004).<sup>31</sup> Its goals then are the same as those of the RAE in terms of the consolidation of *el español común* represented by a particular ‘pure’ variety, free from ‘distorting noises’.

## The Spanish media

The media is largely recognized by Academicians as being a particularly powerful tool for the transmission of norms, ideas and standards (a point recognized throughout this study and which forms the basis of the data selection). The Academician Blecua spoke in an interview of ‘a very abstract and flexible norm, which is the educated, cultured norm, the standard language, which can be understood everywhere’ (*El País* 19 October 2001).<sup>32</sup> When pressed as to



who he believed most convincingly represented and determined this norm, he stated that:

I believe it's the norm of prestigious writers, scientific texts and, above all, the media, in particular the most imitable models, especially radio and television. For this reason, these organization have an enormous responsibility, greater even than that of teachers. One of those responsibilities is to avoid crowding ordinary people's speech with fillers. (*El País* 19 October 2001)<sup>33</sup>

What this shows is that not only is there a clear recognition of the power of the media in contemporary society to influence language use (in both positive and potentially negative ways as indicated by Blecau), but that this influence is exercised over spoken language through audio-visual media as well as written language through the print media. As such, the Academy and its members make recommendations about the role and consequently the responsibility of media outlets to use correct, standardized language so as not to corrupt public speech.

José Antonio Pascual, another prominent Academician, also makes reference to increased mobility, communications and media and the reliance of these on the need for a clear standard language:

*Nowadays the press sets the standard:* . . . A: There are increased travel opportunities, Internet and, above all, international television channels clamouring to be heard by many people and which use a common neutral language.

Q. Is it not dangerous to leave the norm in their hands?

A. It can't be helped. . . . Today people mimic what appears on the television. (*El País* 13 November 2004)<sup>34</sup>

There are a number of apparent presuppositions on the part of the interviewer when questioning Pascual on the 'danger' of 'leaving the norm in their hands': that 'the' norm does indeed exist, that it belongs 'in the hands' of particular groups, and that perhaps these are not the ideal holders of the norm and in fact represent a 'danger'. Pascual seems almost 'resigned' to the fact that nothing can be done to avoid this. This perhaps explains to some extent why the RAE in particular engages in a considerable amount of criticism of and recommendations (solicited or otherwise) to other language guardians, in that if there are other non-Academy domains through which language practices can be affected, the Academy seeks to include those other guardians within its own sphere of influence and hegemony. In this way, even if other guardians do not heed the Academy's advice, the RAE continues to exercise a hegemonic public position and function, manufacturing consent for its vision of a common, unified Spanish, presided over by multiple

agencies but employing the same standardizing criteria and expectations as set down by the Academy and its associates.

## The discursive legitimization of role and authority

The discursive strategies employed by the RAE as well as commentators and journalists in order to legitimize the Academy's particular role and authority in the press are the focus of this section. Of interest to this CDA are the ways in which specific discursive strategies are used in order to manufacture consent among readers and the wider Spanish-speaking public for the acceptance, reinforcement and expansion of the RAE's role and authority. By drawing on Wodak's idea of 'topoi' (2001), it will become clear how the RAE bases its arguments on a number of recurring points of information, interpretation and application, and so the ideological vocabulary and inclusive grammar used in the construction of these argumentative strategies will be highlighted.

### History

Numerous examples already considered in this book show that the institutional discourse of the RAE tends to draw on the argument that, as a historical institution, its legitimacy lies in nearly three hundred years of its work to standardize, defend and elaborate the Spanish language. Experience and history are presented as the premise for the expertise, prestige and future legitimacy of whatever standardizing activities the RAE engages in. In an article highlighting the achievements of film dubbing studios in producing a neutral Spanish 'from nowhere', Juan Luis Cebrián, founding editor of *El País* and one of the younger Academicians, appeals to the historical achievements of the academies:

[T]he unity of the language was achieved in the last century 'by the Royal Spanish Academy and the Spanish American Academies which were created in the midst of the independence wars of the peoples of the American continent against Spain. It is admirable to see how civil society institutions in the midst of a military confrontation like this one ensured the stability of language, which is the main cultural heritage that we have.' (*ABC* 10 April 1997)<sup>35</sup>

The Academies' power to secure an enduring standard common language in the face of war is the historical achievement that frames Cebrián's claim. Also present is the sense that the Academies' vital creative work continues

whatever the political events of the time, hinting that language guardians are detached from political inconsistencies. Continuity and effectiveness over time and a seemingly apolitical agenda are desirable characteristics the Academies claim for themselves which contribute to an image of authenticity. Yet both its conservative attitude towards language change and its political acquiescence to the Franco regime during the twentieth century mean that this representation of the RAE is contestable. Nevertheless, historical-based arguments appear in other parts of the data corpus, including statements which are not direct quotations of the Academicians yet which represent the way in which journalists regard the Academy's history as one of the key indicators of its authority.<sup>36</sup>

Víctor García de la Concha, in one of his many speeches promoting the collaborative work of the RAE and ASALE, talks about the equality and fraternity between them, before singling out the RAE:

*'We work together equally':* I just said 'equally'. The Congress held in 1998 in Puebla de los Angeles, once again in Mexico, the Articles of the Association were amended . . . to recognize one fact: that each and every one of the academies is equal in brotherhood and that the Spanish Academy only fulfils the objective role of 'primus inter pares' due to being the oldest academy. (*El País* 16 October 2001)<sup>37</sup>

This represents an admission that the RAE does indeed fulfil a different role to the other Academies. The RAE's director attributes this to the fact that it is the oldest academy, but there are manifestations of its primacy which are not so convincingly explained – or justified – by the institution's age. These include the prolonged Eurocentric dictionary which left peninsular Spanish items unmarked yet signalled words with Latin American roots and/or meanings, the fact that the Spanish Academy leads the ASALE in many policy decisions, and also the (arguably related) fact that the incumbent director of the Spanish Academy also becomes president of the ASALE.

On the one hand, a topos of history positively frames discussions of the Academy and is a strategy arguing for its continued legitimacy and authority; on the other hand, the modernization of the Academy's practices and its adoption of technology for managing the Spanish lexicon means it can now also claim to be at the cutting edge of language management and be changing in accordance with modern times.<sup>38</sup> With its history of standardization and now its technologically advanced present, it is not surprising that the RAE is widely perceived as 'guardián natural de la lengua' (*ABC* 16 November 2005).

## Authority

Another legitimizing strategy is to refer explicitly to the authority that the RAE and its members (particularly directors) already have. When Lázaro Carreter was director, his fellow Academician and *ABC* editor Luís María Anson wrote of him as ‘the highest authority in the Spanish language, one of our most esteemed intellectuals and a man who carries enormous influence among younger generations’ (*ABC* 2 April 1997),<sup>39</sup> emphasizing not only his being the highest authority but also linking this with his intellect and influence. I have already discussed above how Victor García de la Concha claims to represent Spain and carry national authority when travelling on ‘state visits’, a claim which he would surely not make on the basis of his individual identity, but in relation to his leadership of the Academy and this institution’s leadership of international language matters.

Journalists tend to frame members of the RAE as experts by the referential strategy of always referring positively to their status as académicos, for example:

The renowned linguist and member of the Royal Spanish Academy, Francisco Rodríguez Adrados (*ABC* 24 July 1997)

The academic and writer Luis Goytisolo (*El País* 9 April 1997)

The secretary general of the Association of Academies of the Spanish Language and Puerto Rican academic, Humberto López Morales . . . (*ABC* 29 November 2005)

As noted by the writer and academic Mario Vargas Llosa . . . (*El País* 17 October 2001)

The novelist and scholar Antonio Muñoz Molina . . . (*ABC* 27 March 2007)<sup>40</sup>

While this might be interpreted as simply a ‘common-sense’ description of their work (as we might refer to ‘the teacher, Mr Smith’ or ‘the Minister for Transport’), what also happens is that this reference not only identifies their job or role, but additionally places them in a position to speak on the matters which follow. Furthermore, even where these same men (which, for the most part, they are<sup>41</sup>) have other designations such as the linguist, the novelist, the writer, *académico* is always collocated with these other titles, somewhat indicating an important ‘badge of honour’.

Elsewhere, two articles point to the authority which is presumed to come from the joint work the RAE and the ASALE engage in. In one, the RAE’s Ignacio Bosque gave a statement about the collaborative projects of the Academies, and

in particular reference to the first Grammar to be released since the RAE's 1931 version, remarked that:

We are very conscious of our responsibility and we know that we have to do everything possible so that this publication reaches the standard that is expected of us. (*El País* 13 November 2004)<sup>42</sup>

The inference here is that the new Grammar builds on the authority and high standards previously enjoyed by the RAE's 1931 Grammar, and that with the authority of the Academies comes the responsibility to do what is expected of them – something Bosque is confident they will do. In another article, the RAE director repeats the word 'all' three times, and this repetition emphasizes the consensus of all Spanish language authorities and the 'manera colegiada' in which decisions are taken in the production of the Academy's authoritative dictionary:

On the basis of the lexical database, and the publication in 1997 of the new Dictionary plan, which is governed by the new structure and the strengthening of all the Hispanic Academies' work, we have been able to prepare this edition', commented the director. 'All linguistic decisions were taken in partnership. In keeping with the logic of this work and with what it represents, all the Spanish language academies are now listed on the back of the new dictionary.' (*El País* 12 October 2001)<sup>43</sup>

Expressing the unanimity of the Academies as a foregrounded topic further adds to the full picture being represented in the media, which is of a completely united front making authoritative pronouncements on a united language for a united community. The nature of diversity – although acknowledged – is not commented upon in this article nor in the majority of others, which has the effect of closing down the possibility of debate around differences in language, standards and viewpoints. The asymmetrical social relations manifested in both these social practices and the actual content and strategies of this discourse are reflections of the Academy's language ideologies. As Fairclough (2001) argues, assumptions about the relative authority of different interlocutors and their roles and rights within discourse are well established and ritualized in institutional discourse, and it is clear from the Academy's discourse that it views and reinforces its authority as superior.

## **Agency**

Aside from the RAE's increasing number of publications, the public understanding of the role of the Academy is established and reinforced through appealing to its

historical function and to the authoritative position it claims in language matters. Another discursive strategy to be found in the press deals with the issue of the Academy's relationship with – and responsibilities to – 'ordinary' language users. In terms of an explicit acknowledgement of who has power in matters of language standardization, the vision of the RAE is clear: responsibility for the formation of language lies with Spanish speakers as the innovators of linguistic usages and norms. In the view of the Academy and those who speak on its behalf, Spanish-speakers themselves agree on language conventions through the very act of using particular terms, and the RAE simply notes the most common usages and considers these to be the most correct.<sup>44</sup> What is more, it is the Spanish-speaking society at large which is in favour of the linguistic unity of Spanish and desires this as a goal.<sup>45</sup> In presenting the processes in this way, the Academy is seen to be responding to the desire of a large but anonymous public by presenting the standardization process in terms of a common commercial transaction: a client requests a service and the service-provider makes the service/product available for public consumption as per the initial request. However, the presupposition is that the current 'product' is not sufficient and that it needs work from an expert institution other than the everyday users in order to make it sufficient. This in turn seems to suggest that everyday users are less qualified to make the best use of language without guidance.

This presentation of the duty of the RAE as a response to popular demand as well as a necessary intervention is seen most clearly here in a speech launching the DPD:

It is our duty. All we have done is to be attentive to what we hear on the street, making it our own and returning it to language users as a set of norms. People have given us the fabric and we have tailored an outfit from it. (*El País* 10 November 2005)<sup>46</sup>

Underlying this metaphor of the 'linguistic tailor' is the Academy's belief that it takes the raw material of the Spanish language and produces something more useful and aesthetically pleasing than just 'the word on the street' as a raw material that it claims to represent. This again raises the issue of whether it is purely the language itself or the wider socio-political context of 'the street' which is the target of verbal and even non-verbal hygiene. Such a language ideology could remain veiled behind the notion of the all-inclusive yet anonymous 'public' (Gal and Woolard 2001), but critical analysis here reveals ideology brokers and identifies the discursive construction (or obfuscation) of their perceived role.

The discussion of agency is developed further by a topos of numbers, in which the high volume and frequency of requests and queries that the Academy

receives is taken to be a justification for its standardizing practices, with no discussion of whether those asking for the norms have any role in the debate surrounding those same norms. Common statements include:<sup>47</sup>

The Academy receives hundreds of similar proposals every day, spontaneous proposals from individuals and groups. (*ABC* 4 September 1997)

This flood of requests led us to promote the Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts. (*ABC* 18 October 2001)

In the same vein, the academies reveal the purpose of Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts . . . it constitutes 'the framework to provide the Hispanic community with a unified set of guidelines regarding language problems that continuously arise'. (*El País* 20 October 2001)

. . . we, the Academies, have all agreed on a response to Spanish speakers who continually ask us for norms and guidelines. (García de la Concha 2005a)

Common to all these examples is a problem-solution structure in which the doubts, queries and requests of Spanish-speakers constitute a problem to which the RAE responds with answers which standardize the usage and consequently solve the perceived problem. What this structure allows the Academy to do is legitimize its work, first by the claim that it is asked by the public to do what it does in terms of standardization and offering language advice, and secondly by the inference that without its work, the problems of linguistic doubt and unclear usage would remain.

When the DPD was launched in November 2005, *El País* published an interview with Víctor García de la Concha who referred to the collaboration of the Academies as 'a path of no return',<sup>48</sup> and went on to say that:

It is true that there are good style guides coming from a range of media sources, but Spanish speakers want to hear the voice of the Academies. (*El País* 10 November 2005)<sup>49</sup>

A critical analysis of agency here suggests first that the RAE's role as the authoritative 'voice' is being reinforced with its output representing the final say on matters of language. Furthermore, by framing the media as a source, there is the suggestion of a passive role for the style guides published therein, whereas the more active nuance of being a voice locates the RAE above these other publications, which are placed lower down in the hierarchy of linguistic authorities. García de la Concha's apparent claim to speak alongside and on behalf of 'Spanish-speakers' about their alleged desires are grand terms to use indeed.

## Summary

What has emerged in the course of this chapter is a clear sense of the way in which the role of the Academy – particularly as *primus inter pares* alongside the other Academies – is discussed and ideologically transmitted in the Spanish press. Having sought to leave behind its original motto of ‘to cleanse, to fix and to give splendour’, the RAE has in recent years concentrated its practices (and its public discourse) much more on unifying the language and unifying the inter-Academic practices which will ensure the standardization of the global *español común* that is envisaged by the Academies. Equally, the RAE has sought to change the public perception of its formerly conservative practices by representing its work as primarily descriptive or normative without being prescriptive with the task of reflecting the language that Spanish-speakers use; nevertheless the prescriptive element of the Academy’s work remains and it acts alongside the ASALE as a ‘gatekeeper’ for the variations and changes that would supposedly break the linguistic (and potentially political, diplomatic, commercial, etc.) unity if these were allowed to go unchecked. This chapter has also discussed how the IC and the Spanish language media are promoted in their roles as co-workers with the RAE and ASALE in the task of defending and guaranteeing the continued unity and increasing strength of Spanish. The role of Spain’s King Juan Carlos is particularly remarkable in the way that the Academy and the IC (and therefore the Spanish establishment of which these are a part) capitalize on his very public position and international popularity in order not only to highlight their own associations and legitimacy with him, but also to cement discourses and institutional ideologies of panhispanic unity. The King is then seen to be fulfilling a role around which this unity is centred, and which can easily be presented as ‘King of Spanish-speakers’, even if this phrase is avoided; certainly Juan Carlos becomes guarantor of Hispanophone unity through the discursive construction of the common, panhispanic linguistic territory.

The media frequently and consistently give significant coverage to language authorities, both as individuals and institutions. It is the contention of this book that the assumptions regarding the complex interplay of roles, authority and legitimacy which are embedded in these discourses actually serve to exclude many other possible contributions to language debates by those speakers who happen to fall outside the idealized profile of a ‘good’ or ‘correct’ Spanish language user.

Through media discourse, the RAE’s contemporary responsibilities are premised on a repeated description of its historical function in service of the



state and its citizens. The public perception of its responsibilities is also based on reinforcing a sense of its position as the ultimate authority in Spanish language management that it fulfils, as well as being based on discussions of public demand for the Academy's ever-increasing number and range of publications and services. It becomes apparent then that the ideology of standardization has changed little since the RAE's inception, although as we shall see in the next chapter, the scope of a standard Spanish has certainly developed over time from being largely focused on national-based varieties to a wider view of a standardized, global, common variety of Spanish, framed by the emergence of a panhispanic norm. This is further reflected in the many and varied political and commercial links which depend upon the continued standardization of Spanish and its worldwide promotion as a commodified language 'package'. These political and commercial links constitute a significant part of the discussion of the status of Spanish in the world, and it is to this theme of media discourse that I now turn in the final analytical chapter.

## Notes

- 1 Lograr la unidad es, según Fernando Lázaro Carreter, el gran objetivo de la Academia, 'que ya no limpia, fija y da esplendor, porque limpiar sería terrible, ya que hay que traer muchas palabras que son la civilización moderna; fijar haría un lenguaje paralítico, muerto, y esplendor lo da unas veces o no, porque en realidad, los que dan esplendor son los grandes escritores, pero no la Academia, que tiene como objetivo conseguir que todos los hispanohablantes tengan un punto de referencia.
- 2 'el exceso de préstamos.'
- 3 La Real Academia Española (RAE) ha vivido una gran revolución tecnológica en los últimos doce años, que ha venido a facilitar el trabajo que los académicos desarrollan para velar por la mayor de nuestras riquezas culturales: el idioma.
- 4 Ahora [Víctor García de la Concha] es director de la Academia y vela por la lengua de 400 millones de hispanohablantes.
- 5 Amparo Moraleda calificó como un placer ayudar a la RAE a velar por la unidad de la lengua.
- 6 'La Academia está para dar unidad al idioma, que puede ser uno y distinto. Una misma partitura, como la lengua española, se puede tocar de distintas maneras en México, en Soria o en Andalucía. El diccionario es el código del que todos participamos, y por eso la Academia tiene que trabajar para que sea reconocido como tal código.'
- 7 'la sala de maquinas del idioma; el centro espiritual donde se gesta esa unidad.'

- 8 'Calibrarla, medirla y registrarla es precisamente la tarea de que se ocupan nuestras Academias.'
- 9 'no tiene sino que recoger el lenguaje usado por la gente.'
- 10 . . . la Academia tiene una función notarial de ver qué es lo que está pasando y qué es lo que dicen los usuarios, López Morales está seguro de que en un futuro el Diccionario de la Real Academia recogerá talibán como singular y 'talibanes' como plural.
- 11 Luis Herrero se quejó de la rápida aceptación por parte de la Academia de la palabra guay. El director de la RAE explicó que es un término que utiliza la gente y que el Diccionario debe ser un espejo de la lengua que se habla, no una selección de los términos que prefieren los académicos.
- 12 'recomendar determinados usos cuando se considere que forman parte de la lengua culta general estándar.'
- 13 Porque la norma – es bien sabido – no la hacen los académicos sino los hablantes. La Academia y la Asociación de Academias cumplen una función notarial o registral: abren sus ojos y sus oídos para ver y oír lo que el pueblo hispanohablante, en un nivel medio de cultura, considera correcto o incorrecto, culto, coloquial o vulgar. Y lo fijan en el cuerpo, cambiante como organismo vivo que es, del sistema de la Lengua [sic] española.
- 14 'El diccionario de la RAE refleja una lengua consolidada', asegura Blecua quien pone un ejemplo muy gráfico a los lectores: 'durante la transición a los coches se les llamaban lecheras porque eran blancos. Si estas palabras se hubieran aceptado habría que haberlas cambiado, el diccionario debe esperar a que se consoliden.' Pero el lenguaje no entiende ni de modas ni legislaciones. Los debates generados sobre el sexismo del lenguaje o la aceptación de la palabra matrimonio para parejas del mismo sexo sólo caben en la legislación, el diccionario se limita a 'dar cuenta de los significados válidos.'
- 15 'ponerle nombre a las cosas es transformar su condición, darles una consistencia nueva, o sea, en definitiva, inventarlas, crearlas.'
- 16 1st International Congress of the Spanish Language: Linguists and scholars reject proposal to 'retire' of spelling norms. Zamora: 'It's possible to be a great writer and know little about linguistics'. Lapesa: 'Those who speak against spelling norms are usually people who have not subjected themselves to any kind of rules'. Alarcos: . . . 'What's more, García Márquez is exaggerating. The Spanish spelling system is one of the simplest, and learning it provides a simple visual image of words'. . . . For his part, Luis Goytisolo described the Nobel prize-winner's proposal as 'nonsense'. . . . Nieva: 'it's a joke'. . . . Salvador: 'García Márquez has turned into magic realism what his prose touches and views as acceptable'. / *I Congreso Internacional de la Lengua Española: Lingüistas y académicos rechazan la 'jubilación de la ortografía'*. Zamora: 'Se puede ser un gran escritor y saber poco de lingüística'. Lapesa: 'Los que

- hablan contra la ortografía suelen ser personas que no se han ocupado de sujetarse a ninguna norma.' Alarcos: . . . 'Además, García Márquez exagera. La ortografía española es de las más sencillas y su aprendizaje aporta una sencilla imagen visual de las palabras'. . . Por su parte, Luis Goytisoló calificó de 'despropósito' la propuesta del Nobel. . . Nieva: 'De broma'. . . Salvador: 'García Márquez convierte en realismo mágico lo que su prosa toca y viste como aceptable' (*ABC* 9 April 1997).
- 17 The Royal Spanish Academy asks teachers to be strict with spelling in entrance selection exams. / *La Real Academia pide a los profesores que sean rigurosos con la ortografía en las pruebas de selectividad* (*El País* 14 April 1997).
- 18 Camilo José Cela . . . lamented the fact that Latin has been dropped from school teaching. / Camilo José Cela . . . se lamentó del olvido del latín en la enseñanza (*ABC* 8 April 1997).
- 19 'Language education among Spaniards is terrible.' / '*La educación idiomática de los españoles es pésima*' (*El País* 30 March 1997).
- 20 According to [Fernando Lázaro Carreter] the director of the Royal Spanish Academy . . . we especially analyze the use that journalists make of language, their working tool. / Según [Fernando Lázaro Carreter] el director de la Real Academia Española . . . se analice especialmente el uso que los periodistas hacen de éste, su instrumento de trabajo (*ABC* 13 April 1997).
- 21 *We work together equally*: (Victor García de la Concha) . . . That your excellency has, in the context of this State visit, made time to come to this House expresses in itself the consciousness that your excellency has of language as the common homeland of the Hispanic peoples, and of *all that is achieved in pursuit of linguistic unity by the Royal Spanish Academy and the sister Academies* who together make up the Association of Academies. / *Trabajamos en pie de igualdad*: (Victor García de la Concha) . . . Que en el marco de la visita de Estado haya V. E. reservado un espacio para venir a esta Casa expresa por sí solo la conciencia que V. E. tiene de lo que la Lengua supone como patria común de los pueblos hispánicos, y de *lo que al servicio de su unidad hacen la Real Academia Española y las Academias hermanas* que con ella integran la Asociación de Academias (*El País* 16 October 2001).
- 22 Cuando, va ya para trescientos años, S. M. el Rey Felipe V firmó la 'Cédula de aprobación y protección real a favor de la Academia', subrayaba de manera repetida que ésta se constituía con el objetivo de 'servir al bien público y a la honra de la Nación, sirviendo a la lengua castellana'. . . la Real Academia Española nacía promovida por un grupo de ilustrados novatores, renovadores, que pensaban en el pueblo y querían hacerlo todo para el pueblo y con el pueblo.
- 23 . . . Al agradecer de todo corazón el Premio, la Real Academia Española quiere decir que lo acepta, más que como un reconocimiento, como un estímulo para cumplir mejor cada día su objetivo fundacional: 'servir al bien público y a la honra de la Nación, sirviendo a la lengua castellana', al español.

- 24 'artífice y referente continuo de la concordia no solo entre los españoles sino entre todos los pueblos de habla hispana.'
- 25 'Mis viajes son verdaderos viajes de Estado'
- 26 . . . Su Majestad ha sido y es el inspirador y generoso impulsor de la política lingüística panhispánica de la Academia y de las Academias. Me atreví a añadir entonces que nuestro Rey no ejercía solo el alto patronazgo constitucional de nuestra Academia sino también el de la Asociación. Al día siguiente, en una reunión de trabajo celebrada en nuestra Casa de Felipe IV, el representante de Colombia pidió la palabra para presentar una moción que todos aprobaron con entusiasmo: la de 'felicitar a Su Majestad en el trigésimo aniversario de su reinado por ser -son palabras textuales - artífice y referente continuo de la concordia no solo entre los españoles sino entre todos los pueblos de habla hispana.'
- 27 The Second Congress of the Spanish Language in Valladolid will boost Spanish as an economic resource. / *El II Congreso de la Lengua de Valladolid potenciará el español como recurso económico* (ABC 28 September 2001). The Fourth Congress will be held in Cartagena de Indias in 2007. / *El IV Congreso se celebrará en Cartagena de Indias en 2007* (ABC 20 November 2004).
- 28 ABC enters the engine room of the language. / *ABC entra en la sala de máquinas del idioma* (ABC 16 November 2004).
- 29 The Royal Academy at 200 mph. / *La Real Academia, a 200 por hora* (El País 19 November 2004). The Royal Spanish Academy and the Cervantes Institute create an Observatory of Neologisms to monitor the language. / *La Real Academia Española y el Instituto Cervantes crean un Observatorio del Neologismo para vigilar el idioma* (ABC 20 October 2001).
- 30 Luego están las tareas del Instituto Cervantes, que ha colaborado muy estrechamente en la elaboración del Diccionario, y para el que resulta también un instrumento imprescindible. . . . Lo que ahora toca, en el caso del Cervantes, es unificar las directrices, establecer pautas comunes en la enseñanza de la lengua, establecer esas normas que deben garantizar que su transmisión no se cargue de ruidos que la desvirtúen. Un diccionario que resuelve las dudas es esencial en esa tarea.
- 31 'con este Diccionario se podrá enseñar siempre el mismo español en cualquier rincón.'
- 32 Una norma abstracta muy flexible, que es la norma culta, la lengua estándar, la que se puede entender en todos lados.
- 33 Creo que es la de los escritores prestigiosos, los textos científicos y, sobre todo, los medios. Los modelos más imitables, sobre todo la radio y la televisión. Por eso tienen una responsabilidad enorme, mayor que la de los profesores. Una de ellas es no llenar de muletillas el habla de la gente.

- 34 III Congreso de la Lengua Española: 'Hoy la prensa marca la norma'  
 . . . hay aviones, Internet y, sobre todo, canales internacionales de televisión que tratan de ser oídos por muchas personas y usan un idioma neutro común.  
 P. ¿No es un peligro dejar la norma en sus manos?  
 R. No hay más remedio. . . . Hoy se imita lo que sale en televisión.
- 35 . . . la unidad del idioma fue conseguida el siglo pasado 'por la Real Academia Española y las Academias hispanoamericanas que se fueron creando en medio de las guerras de independencia de los pueblos del continente americano contra España. Es admirable ver cómo instituciones de la sociedad civil en medio de una confrontación bélica de esas características garantizaron la estabilidad del idioma, que constituye el principal patrimonio cultural que tenemos.'
- 36 Vicente Fox receives homage of the 22 academies: The RAE and its partners celebrate the splendour of Spanish half a century after their association. / Vicente Fox recibe el homenaje de las 22 academias: La RAE y sus asociadas celebran el esplendor del español medio siglo después de su unión (*El País* 16 October 2001).
- 37 '*Trabajamos en pie de igualdad*': Acabo de decir 'en pie de igualdad'. En el Congreso celebrado en 1998 en Puebla de los Ángeles -una vez más, de nuevo, México- se modificaron los Estatutos de la Asociación, . . . para reconocer un hecho: que todas y cada una de las Academias que la integramos somos iguales en hermandad y que la Española cumple sólo el objetivo papel del 'primus inter pares' por razón de antigüedad.
- 38 The Royal Academy, at 200 mph./ *La Real Academia, a 200 por hora* (*El País* 19 November 2004); The economic value and future of the Spanish language. / El valor económico y el futuro del español (*ABC* 16 November 2005).
- 39 'la máxima autoridad en el idioma español, uno de nuestros más altos intelectuales y un hombre que tiene una vastísima influencia en las nuevas generaciones.'
- 40 El prestigioso lingüista y miembro de la Real Academia Española Francisco Rodríguez Adrados (*ABC*, 24 July 1997); El académico y escritor Luis Goytisolo (*El País* 9 April 1997); El secretario general de la Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española y académico puertorriqueño, Humberto López Morales . . . (*ABC* 29 November 2005); Como ha señalado el escritor y académico Mario Vargas Llosa . . . (*El País* 17 October 2001); El novelista y académico Antonio Muñoz Molina . . . (*ABC* 27 March 2007).
- 41 At the time of publication, just 5 of the 43 permanent seats in the Academy were occupied by women, with the first woman entering the RAE in 1998.
- 42 Somos muy conscientes de nuestra responsabilidad y sabemos que hemos de hacer todo lo posible para que la obra esté a la altura de lo que se espera de nosotros.
- 43 'Con la base del banco, la publicación, en 1997, de la nueva planta del Diccionario, por la que se rige la nueva construcción y la potenciación del trabajo de todas las academias hispanas, hemos podido preparar esta edición,' contó el director.

- Todas las decisiones lingüísticas se han adoptado de manera colegiada. En correspondencia lógica con el trabajo realizado y con lo que representa, todas las academias de lengua española figuran en la contraportada del nuevo Diccionario.
- 44 'The Academy is just a notary of linguistic usage, and it tries to recommend those uses on which the Spanish-speaking community has agreed most and therefore considers more correct', he affirms. / 'La Academia no es más que un notario de los usos idiomáticos y trata de recomendar aquellos en los que la comunidad de hispanohablantes ha estado más de acuerdo y que, por tanto, considera más correctos', afirma (*El País* 30 March 1997).
- 45 Spanish-speakers throughout society, who are fully represented in Zacatecas, have expressed the desire to maintain and defend their common language from invasion by the English language, which is coming mainly via digital means. / La sociedad hispanohablante, cabalmente representada en Zacatecas, ha expresado el deseo de mantener su idioma común y defenderlo ante la invasión anglosajona, que llega principalmente por la vía informática (*El País* 13 April 1997).
- 46 'Es nuestra obligación. Lo único que hemos hecho es estar atentos a lo que oímos en la calle, hacerlo nuestro y devolvérselo a los hablantes en forma de norma. La gente nos ha dado la tela y nosotros hemos confeccionado un traje' (*El País* 10 November 2005). A similar metaphor occurs in an interview with Pedro Luís Barcía, president of the *Academia Argentina de Letras*: 'Tomamos de la lengua del pueblo su naturalidad, la ordenamos y la devolvemos al pueblo, para que el pueblo tome conciencia del bagaje que tiene, de la riqueza que realmente tiene en su expresión, en su vocabulario, y que se sienta orgulloso de esto' (*El País* 14 November 2004).
- 47 'La Academia recibe cientos de propuestas similares cada día, propuestas de espontáneos individuales y colectivos' (*ABC* 9 April 1997); 'esta avalancha de peticiones nos ha llevado a promover el Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas' (*ABC* 18 October 2001); En la misma línea, las academias manifiestan el propósito de que el Diccionario panhispánico de dudas . . . constituya 'el marco para brindar a la comunidad hispanohablante una orientación unificada en los problemas lingüísticos que de continuo se presentan' (*El País* 20 October 2001); . . . que todas las Academias hayamos podido consensuar una respuesta a los hispanohablantes que de continuo nos piden normas y nos piden indicaciones (García de la Concha 2005a).
- 48 'un camino sin retorno.'
- 49 Es verdad que hay buenos libros de estilo en los medios de comunicación, pero los hispanohablantes quieren oír la voz de las Academias.

# The Spanish Language in the World

## Introduction

The language debates concerning Spanish as a unified language, and also those debates establishing the role of the guardians of that unity, both lead on to debates which propose a wider application of the kinds of arguments and ideologies which have been established in the discourse we have seen. This application relates to how the Spanish language is discursively constructed as a commodity and then both discursively and also very practically promoted in a global linguistic 'market' in competition with other widespread languages. In this chapter, the last in which media data is examined, the focus will first be on identifying and explaining the discursive strategies employed by the RAE to frame discussions of the Spanish language and its role, reach and importance around the globe. Understanding the mechanisms of this discourse will necessarily involve pinpointing the overarching themes of these debates as well as the particular grammatical and lexical items which mark the RAE's discourse. The next focus of this chapter will be a consideration of the notion of Spanish as a pluricentric language, and how the acknowledgement of numerous prestigious (and other) norms squares with the driving argument about a single, unified language. The chapter considers how the RAE publicly debates these norms and that of *el español común*, before reviewing the policy response to various challenges to standardization which has materialized in the form of the PLP. In the final section, the competing discourses regarding ownership of the language come under the spotlight, and the discussion will consider to whom Spanish 'belongs'. This discussion involves an analysis of the various potential scales of 'belonging' – local, national and global – and the discursive and metaphorical references made to these in the press.

## The framing of debates about Spanish in the world

### A language in expansion

In contrast to the debates considered in Chapter 4 on the threats to Spanish and the subsequent defence of the language, there is a strand of discourse in media debates which – similar to the discourse on the ‘health’ of Spanish – emphasizes the very real and positive growth being experienced in terms of the number of speakers, not to mention the linguistic influence exercised by the community of Spanish-speakers. This discourse has been naturalized by the repetitive use of the phrase *lengua en expansión* (growing language). In one such example from the closing speech of the Rosario CILE, César Antonio Molina of the IC classified Spanish as not only unified (*un idioma*) but also growing (*en expansión en el mundo*). He then argued that the next step for Spanish-speaking countries was to ‘ensure that the 21st century is the century of the Spanish language’,<sup>1</sup> and based this on four topoi: numbers (of speakers), advantage (homogenous, unified), diversity (seemingly in contradiction to unity, but this was discussed earlier) and history (language of culture since eighteenth century). The characteristics granted to Spanish here all follow Molina’s key suggestion, which is that the only one possible next step for Spanish-speaking countries (a metonym by which he is actually referring to the Academies and governments) is to support and reinforce the continuous linguistic spread that Spanish has been enjoying in recent years. In another example, RAE Academician Francisco Rodríguez Adrados expresses the boom of Spanish as a *buen momento* (good moment) for the language, and refers to the ‘astonishing growth’ of the language, not only in terms of number of speakers, but also in terms of its spread in literature’ (*ABC* 24 April 1997).<sup>2</sup> In addition to the topos of numbers, the literary cultural function of Spanish features as an index of its remarkable international success.

Phillipson’s concept of ‘linguistic imperialism’ (1992) is a useful one which can be used to frame the discourse and practices of Spanish language spread as part of ‘imperial’ projects of linguistic, political and ideological spread across and beyond the Spanish-speaking world. Indeed, journalists have broached such suspicions with Academicians and have received responses such as the following:

Will many more conferences be needed? . . . ‘Yes, because we must be aware of the value of language’, said the deputy director of the Spanish Academy, Gregorio Salvador. And do we not run the risk of believing what Nebrija said, that language and empire are the same, and they both fall together? ‘But



he said that about the Roman Empire, and that was related to another time!  
(*El País* 29 March 2007)<sup>3</sup>

The interviewer suggests that Nebrija's statement might apply to the contemporary spread of Spanish (and, by inference, a new Spanish Empire). Salvador, the RAE's deputy director known for his promotion of Spanish and deprecation of minority languages,<sup>4</sup> disagrees and explains the 'true' context of Nebrija's remarks. He disassociates the Nebrijan hypothesis from contemporary Spanish expansion by consigning and limiting that view firmly to the annals of history, and restricts its reference to the Roman Empire. Due to the fact that in contemporary liberal societies, the notion and associations of empire are widely rejected (and *El País* is, importantly, a robustly liberal, centrist publication), Salvador avoids the collocation of language with empire to prevent any such connection being made. He seeks instead to ensure that language spread continues to be discursively framed by positive topoi of unity, community and advantage (as established elsewhere in the press).

Besides the growing number of speakers, the spread of Spanish is also contextualized by debates on the economic value of the language. The expansion of Spanish is seen to take place economically through its dominance in new and important markets, as well as its consolidation in technological domains, as seen in the headline: 'The economic outlook for Spanish depends on the conquest of new technologies' (*El País* 19 October 2001).<sup>5</sup>

As we saw in the previous chapter, the authority of the Academies and their practices such as the CILEs means that their conclusions are presented as convincing and definitive to the Spanish-speaking public. It follows that the content and tone of language debates is established by the salient message coming from these Congresses:

*The Cartagena de Indias Congress concludes with the recognition of the expansion of Spanish:* The Fourth International Congress of the Spanish Language, which concluded on Thursday in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), has revealed that Spanish has consolidated its role as a language for universal communication and Latin American unity. 'We have a language that is extraordinarily unified and connected, and this is a huge strength that contributes to its growth', said the director of the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE), Víctor García de la Concha, in the closing ceremony. (*El País* 30 March 2007)<sup>6</sup>

This conclusion to the 2007 Conference 'seals' the event and takes forward a clear and official message from it that the consolidation of Spanish in the world

is a perfected process (*se ha consolidado*) and hence an objective reality. Not only is the language presented as the basis of universal communication but also of Latin American unity. As such, language spread and supranational unity are discursively constructed as going hand in hand, and any moves away from this and towards greater emphasis on the national level or distinctive linguistic features would be negatively framed as anti-unitary. Language as a basis for unity becomes a common-sense concept, more so than the economic unity based on transnational companies which also form numerous links between Spain and America, and which are still seen as interest-laden.

Debates around the expansion of Spanish in the world are also framed by comparisons with other 'global' languages such as English, Chinese, French, and so on. In particular, the push for the expansion of Spanish is partly seen as a response to the perceived threat to its status of English:

Q. How can Spanish be protected from the force of the English language?

A. The first thing we need to do is to spread the Spanish language. (*El País* 14 November 2004)<sup>7</sup>

In this interview, the director of the Argentinean Academy of Letters frames the expansion of Spanish as an action, and the main priority of language authorities in response to the power of global English:<sup>8</sup>

The intention of this Congress, or rather of those who have organized it, is to be able to integrate these two worlds of seeking on the one hand their own profiles, peculiarities and regional characteristics, and on the other hand, the need for expansion of the language, with more general and international elements so that Spanish can compete in markets, including in linguistic markets, with other languages such as English. (*El País* 14 November 2004)<sup>9</sup>

Present in this last extract is the presupposition that Spanish language spread is 'necessary', and the juxtaposition of value for regional linguistic diversity with the importance of overarching, unifying features of Spanish which enable it to 'compete in markets . . . with other languages such as English'. Employing the modern capitalist economic discourse of the market with its invisible forces obscures final agency for the success (or otherwise) of a language on an international level. Language guardians' regulation of Spanish is justified on the basis that the panhispanic aspects of language must be emphasized to ensure international acceptance of Spanish. This in turn legitimizes the policies and practices of guardians in pursuit of this goal, most notably the PLP.

The need for a broad coalition of language guardians to regulate and further spread Spanish as a consequence of (and contributing factor to) its status in the world is further underlined by the King of Spain. In his speech at a 2005 ceremony in which the Vocento media group (owners of *ABC*) awarded its annual Premio a los Valores Humanos (Prize for Human Values) to the RAE, Juan Carlos advocated that:

The cultivation and expansion of our language in the world – a goal that the media is aiming for too – must continue to focus our joint efforts and collective dreams. (*ABC* 16 November 2005)<sup>10</sup>

The King employs a mode of obligation (*deben*, 'must') to indicate the responsibility upon language guardians to combine hopes, efforts and concrete activities towards the growth and spread of Spanish. The inclusive possessive pronoun in *nuestros esfuerzos comunes* ('our joint efforts') positions the King – and arguably by inference those institutions he represents and patronizes – alongside those language authorities already engaged in spreading Spanish. Again, this works to naturalize discourse towards a broader inclusion of commercial and other enterprises in language standardization and the implementation of planning and policy.

The IC's director talks similarly of the obligations of his own institution in collaboration with the Academies when he remarks that 'I believe that Spanish is the language of the 21st century, and we must all strive to ensure that it is consolidated and spread' (*El País* 17 November 2004).<sup>11</sup> While the authority and responsibility for this lies primarily with the institutions in question (and their partner organizations), there is arguably an obligation for all Spanish-speakers (intimated by the inclusive imperative *debemos esforzarnos*) to be active in pursuing this goal. The naturalized discourse in which projecting Spanish internationally is taken as a 'given' aim means that little justification of it is needed. On the other hand, language guardians' discourse – as I have shown – is couched in legitimizing strategies including arguments of the financial benefit, advantage and utility of standardized international Spanish.

Thus far I have noted that language guardians' discourse on Spanish in the world rests on an emphasis of the spread that it is 'naturally' experiencing, as well as the role of guardians in actively expanding its presence and influence. The arguments present a consequent need for continued and further standardization so that the essential unity of Spanish is not 'broken' by linguistic change (Real Academia Española 1995: 7). Equally, there is evidence of discourse emphasizing the need for 'maximal variation in function' – Haugen's elaboration (1972) – and also acceptance of Spanish into hitherto unconquered domains. These spheres

are named frequently as scientific publishing, information technology, the internet and international diplomatic forums including the United Nations and the European Union.<sup>12</sup> Academicians such as Mario Vargas Llosa have argued publicly that their labours must be translated into concrete policies in order to achieve greater acceptance and importance of Spanish not only in cultural terms but also politically and economically (*El País* 16 October 2001).<sup>13</sup> These ‘deficit’ domains are also seen as those in which Spanish ought to be better represented on the basis of the number of Spanish-speakers:

The King said that García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* ‘is itself a living example of the unity of Spanish in its diversity’, a growing language but one which, in order to consolidate this growth, requires a greater presence in science and in international organizations, ‘where it is given the recognition it deserves, due to the number of its speakers’, according to Victor García de la Concha, president of the Royal Spanish Academy and the scientific committee for this Congress. (*El País* 27 March 2007)<sup>14</sup>

García de la Concha’s argument sets the tone for the ongoing legitimization of language planning efforts which seek to expand the presence and influence of Spanish even further. Given that English currently dominates the ‘deficit’ domains of Spanish, one of the goals of the PLP is the consolidation of a globally standardized and unified Spanish language as a ‘match’ for hegemonic English and the Anglo-Saxon cultures – linguistically, scientifically, technologically and diplomatically.

### **A language of the future**

In the previous section, I cited the IC director’s belief that ‘Spanish is the language of the 21st century, and we must all strive to ensure that it is consolidated and spread’ (*El País* 17 November 2004). This belief in the contemporary significance of Spanish is shared by other press protagonists:

In the 21st century – he notes – there will be three languages that the educated person will need to know: English, Spanish and computing. (Cebrián, *ABC* 10 April 1997)<sup>15</sup>

There can only be one next step for the Latin American countries: ‘to ensure that the 21st century is the century of the Spanish language.’ (Molina, *El País* 22 November 2004)<sup>16</sup>

*The Spanish language: 21st century industry:* ‘It is the biggest industry of the 21st century, our main raw material. (Molina, *El País* 2 March 2007)<sup>17</sup>

The 21st century is Spanish-speaking, and will become ever more so. (ABC 16 November 2004)<sup>18</sup>

The common thread of these extracts is the idea that the twenty-first century represents a new 'golden age' for Spanish as a global language, to such an extent that it can be called the language of the century and the century of Spanish. In the last example, the journalist makes the twenty-first century the agent (metonymically representing people who are either native speakers or follow contemporary trends in learning the language) that performs the process of speaking Spanish – the language of progress, modernity and international expansion. Such linguistic practices will, according to this view, continue to grow and be increasingly successful throughout this century.

Underlying the various effects of these texts appears to be an ideology that views Spanish as of unprecedented and escalating importance in the modern world, and which espouses an increasingly prominent profile for the language (and by inference, its speakers) and its related culture in the future. The strengthening and spread of both language and culture are understood to require a multiagency approach in which traditional institutions work towards these goals alongside governments and commercial entities, and this then justifies the economic expansion and unity of Spanish multinationals. Furthermore, if the twenty-first century is indeed to see further growth of Spanish, then it becomes desirable and necessarily for the collective of Spanish-speakers ('us all') to support linguistic and non-linguistic globalization in the coming years.

A prominent element of discourse regarding the internationalization of Spanish is the role that Spanish-speakers in the Americas play in shaping and directing the language:

'The Spanish language in the twenty-first century will be whatever Latin Americans want it to be', declared Cebrián. He also said that Spain could contribute much, but that it was the drive and growth of American speakers who would mark out the path of the Spanish language in the future. He highlighted the work of the Academies in agreeing on the standard, indicated that the effectiveness of the *Instituto Cervantes* is due to its internationalization, claimed that an intense dialogue was being carried out with Brazil and said that it was important to be highly attentive to the situation of Spanglish. (*El País* 20 November 2004)<sup>19</sup>

On the one hand, Cebrián sees the future development of Spanish as very definitely ('será') dependent on its Latin American speakers. On the other hand, the standard and consensual norms which constitute global Spanish still appear

to rest with the Academies as its historical guardians, and with Spain's RAE in particular as the 'leader and hub of the direction and initiatives of Spanish language policy' (Mar-Molinero 2008: 31).

The director general of Telefónica, speaking at the Rosario CILE, argued that 'the future depends on the social – and predominantly cultural – influence of the Spanish-speaking population. Its own capacity and drive to grow is essential' (*El País* 20 November 2004).<sup>20</sup> Such a vision of Latin America's importance and need for more socio-cultural 'weight' is embedded in interconnected social, economic and linguistic policies involving Spain's multinational companies, government and the RAE. Furthermore, this discursive vision forms part of a legitimization and justification for what Del Valle and Villa (2006) call the 'economic recolonization' of the continent by Spanish corporations. In the context of language guardianship, transnational businesses frequently sponsor the CILEs and other language events and publications. Consequently, commercial involvement in the process of language spread is becoming a natural occurrence and even 'common sense', to achieve a cultural (and economic) objective with the assistance of commercial and capitalist means. The argument is partly justified by signalling the significant contribution these companies make to increased literacy through their investment in areas where this is seen to be lacking, and also partly justified by the argument (illustrated above) that they also increase the cultural and social weight of Hispanic countries so as to achieve 'the century of Spanish'. Having seen how the ideology to increase the 'weight' of Spanish through discourses of unity and panhispanism is a response to the threat of hegemonic English, the desired boost to the political–economic–cultural power of the Spanish-speaking community represents a goal for governments and organizations wishing to offset 'Anglo-Saxon' hegemony in these non-linguistic domains. In terms of numbers of speakers, this alliance of linguistic and non-linguistic goals could not be achieved by Spain alone (with only 10% of the world's Spanish-speakers). However, where linguistic conditions favour the spread of economic power from Spain throughout Latin America, the resulting links form a supposed 'community' (Del Valle (2006) calls this *hispanofonía*) which has far more 'weight' to compete with markets, domains and territories hitherto dominated by English.

A final feature to consider here is the way that the future of Spanish is commonly linked to its past,<sup>21</sup> and particularly to significant locations. A topos of history is used to argue that Spanish – now international and growing – should still be associated with its historical homeland, Spain. One such debate concerned the Academies' support for a proposed Spanish language museum (a project

never completed) in Alcalá de Henares, birthplace of Miguel de Cervantes. López Morales proposed that this museum would make Alcalá the 'museum capital of Spanish' (*ABC* 21 October 2001),<sup>22</sup> a predicational strategy attributing a (hypothetical) unique trait to the city. Further positive features are attributed by García de la Concha:

Alcalá is a city that already has more than enough historical and literary titles to justify its prominence in language-related activities, but because of that I urge the city to take such action on behalf of Spanish. (*ABC* 21 October 2001)<sup>23</sup>

Continuing to build on this attribution of prestige to Alcalá, its mayor is then quoted:

The mayor, Manuel Peinado, justified the project in which 'Alcala is there throughout the history of the Spanish language and must also be there in its future.' (*ABC* 21 October 2001)<sup>24</sup>

The origins in Alcalá of Spain's most celebrated writer, the Cervantes prize for Spanish literature, and the renown and reach of these throughout the Spanish-speaking world are firmly underlined and linked to the person (Cervantes) and place (Alcalá) in question. In addition, the 'principal' attribute of the museum is presented as 'the influence of the city "on the form and the use of Spanish"' (*ABC* 21 October 2001).<sup>25</sup> The influence of language guardians over Spanish is obfuscated by portraying the development of Spanish as an agentless process of place and history. As part of the discussion later in this chapter shows, associating language processes with cities is a common discursive strategy. Alcalá (i.e. particular Alcalá-based individuals) had an important role in the past development of Spanish, and Spain's language guardians seek to legitimize a continuing high profile in the success and management of Spanish, not to mention the associated industries of culture and language learning which take place in this significant city of Spain.

## Pluricentric Spanish and the RAE

### **Norms of pluricentric Spanish**

The expansion of Spanish to the Americas with the Conquests of the fifteenth century later developed a number of national and regional linguistic norms which initially correlated to the major vice-royalties of the Spanish Empire.

Centuries later, this has led to the categorization of Spanish as a 'pluricentric' language, meaning that a number of prestigious norms now exist alongside the traditional peninsular standard (see Thompson 1992). In their recent panhispanic works (the DPD and Nueva Gramática) the RAE and ASALE have classified varieties according to seven distinct centres of Spanish norms outside of Spain: United States of America, Mexico and Central America, the Caribbean islands, continental Caribbean, the Andean zone, River Plate and Chile (*El País* 19 November 2004).

In public statements, members of the RAE and ASALE indicate the value placed on the recognized varieties of Spanish. At the launch of the DPD, García de la Concha stated that:

We have presented the Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts, a publication which has been agreed step by step, on an equal footing, from the perspective that standard Spanish is pluricentric and that it is the duty of the Academies to open our ears to the plurality of voices, and to win minds and hearts to the purpose of strengthening the unity of the language. (García de la Concha, *ABC* 15 November 2005)<sup>26</sup>

The RAE's deputy director, too, acknowledges that pluricentric norms exist and have value:

The norms of Spanish usage vary from place to place. Depending on where you are, certain things are said one way or another, and doubts continue to exist. This dictionary will help to clear up such doubts. (Salvador, *El País* 10 November 2005)<sup>27</sup>

As can be seen, however, there is still evidence of the presupposition that, whatever multiple norms exist, there is a need to work with the global unity of the language in mind, and that this trumps the value of any one particular norm that is 'peripheral' to general, unified Spanish. It appears that the Academy's acknowledgement of the value of linguistic diversity has limits: that a pluricentric norm exists does not mean that speakers of that norm have autonomy to stretch that norm beyond what the RAE would consider to be the 'essential unity' that this institution exists to guard.

The RAE is still careful, however, to distinguish between the concept of an international standard Spanish which all speakers (of that 'standard', presumably) are able to understand and use, and the idea that such a standard originates in Spain (I concentrate on this point later in this chapter). An interviewer in



*El País* put it to Blecua that Spaniards had become less Spain-centric regarding language, to which Blecua replied:

Let's get away from that idea, please. Here we have recognized the legitimacy of all varieties that exist: the Spanish of Buenos Aires is as valid as that of Madrid. And it is accepted that there is a very flexible abstract norm, which is the educated norm, the standard language, which can be understood everywhere. (*El País* 19 October 2001)<sup>28</sup>

Of the Nueva Gramática, the Peruvian Academy's vice-president remarked that 'it breaks away from the traditional "peninsular centralism"' (*ABC* 29 November 2005).<sup>29</sup> Academicians recognize then that in the past, standardization has prescriptively upheld peninsular Spanish as the most prestigious norm. Academic discourse claims that this is no longer the case, and it seems that having progressed from a monocentric ideology of prestigious standard Spanish, the RAE now accepts pluricentrism as the rule.

### ***El español común***

In discussions of the PLP, what has proved interesting is the way that along with debates about the defence of the unity of Spanish, the Academies appear to discursively construct and elevate general standard Spanish (*el español común*) which is shaped by the panhispanic norms developed and set down in the various publications which are part of the PLP. It is arguably being placed above all acknowledged norms of pluricentric Spanish – even peninsular Spanish as I shall explain – as a variety which, while encompassing many aspects of these differing norms, is identifiable as a variety in itself because it surpasses the regional ties indexed in the pluricentric norms.

The second of the Academies' truly panhispanic publications is the New Grammar (Nueva Gramática), launched at the fourth CILE in Cartagena in 2007 and published in 2010. In an interview prior to its launch, the RAE's Ignacio Bosque – spokesperson for the project – demonstrated how *el español común* is envisaged:

*Neutral*. . . . And, of course, there's the eternal controversy of neutral Spanish. 'We write about common Spanish and then the varieties, which may correspond to the Caribbean islands, the Spanish of Rio de la Plata, or Asturias, or Murcia,' says the speaker. 'This grammar is a portrait of the language: it shows what we share and what differentiates us.' (*El País* 25 March 2007)<sup>30</sup>

The referential strategy of foregrounding *el español común* by naming it first, and then (*y luego*) referring to the varieties of pluricentric Spanish, suggests that the former is classified as the core variety of Spanish and the latter are classified as varieties precisely because they are not considered to be part of the general standardized language or ‘common Spanish’. The journalist’s choice to use the subtitle ‘Neutro’ reinforces what is already implicit in Bosque’s comments: that the *español común* he refers to is neutral and is not linked to any particular territory or region, unlike the variations which he associates with named Spanish-speaking regions. The norm is not presented as that of Madrid, nor as that which is shaped by the RAE in particular; it is a disembedded, neutral norm, not particular to any nation-state nor to any of the individual Academies. Once again, then, Woolard’s concept of ‘anonymity’ (2007) and Coupland’s concept of ‘disembedding’ (2003) explain the language ideologies apparent in the Academy’s discourse, in that the ‘neutral’ norm is deterritorialized, and language is therefore uncoupled from its link to any one space, place or nation-state. General standard Spanish is framed as an identifiable core variety which is common to all Spanish-speakers and which therefore serves to unite this community, yet is distinct from the regional norms which might also influence educated speakers. The construction of this category of Spanish as a vehicle of wider and better global communication, and its association with unimpeachable foundational values of globalization such as unity, harmony, wider communication and international understanding, assure its standing as a prestigious standard of language. Furthermore, the Academies’ role as guardians of *el español común* – led by the RAE – is underpinned and seen as essential for the safeguarding of the global norm.

Similar in some ways to the idea of the supposedly ‘common’ Spanish is *español total* or total Spanish; both allude to a type of Spanish with no territorial roots, a kind of ‘Spanish from nowhere’ (Woolard 2007). Where they differ is that ‘total Spanish’ reflects the RAE’s confident desire to map the entirety of the Spanish language (Del Valle 2007a), that is, an aggregate of neutral, common Spanish plus all standardized regional norms. Hence the ‘Spanish *from* nowhere’ becomes envisaged as a ‘Spanish *for* everywhere’.

Representative voices of the Academies emphasize the pursuit of ‘total Spanish’ through repetition and naturalization of this phrase:<sup>31</sup>

A complete overview of Spanish. (*El País* 10 November 2005)

The great new feature is that it deals not only with the grammar of peninsular Spanish, of Spain, but of total Spanish. (*ABC* 29 November 2005)

*The Fourth Language Congress will examine the diversity of Spanish:* It is a novelty. For the first time we have a total Spanish grammar, not just of peninsular Spanish. (*El País* 29 March 2006)

A grammar of total Spanish, not just that of Spain. (*ABC* 19 September 2006)

It will be the first total Spanish grammar. (*El País* 1 March 2007)

'[The New Grammar] "is descriptive and normative. It addresses the totality of Spanish and is prepared on the basis of equality throughout the world", said Garcia de la Concha.' (*ABC* 2 March 2007)

In RAE discourse, this 'total Spanish' is seen to be supported by panhispanic norms and publications which are legitimized through a claim of egalitarian values in their production (i.e. 'not only from Spain'; 'developed on the basis of equality throughout the world'). Moreover, the all-encompassing vision of a globally unified Spanish, the panhispanic projects which promote and advance it and the standardizing publications which define its form appear as accessible and applicable to all speakers:<sup>32</sup>

The DPD provides a unified response to any Spanish-speaker. (*El País* 22 November 2001)

A unified response, agreed by all the Academies of the Spanish Language. (Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española 2004: 9)

The Academies of the Spanish Language today clear the doubts of all Spanish-speakers in the world. (*ABC* 13 October 2004)

*The Spanish language, 21st century industry:* 'for the past ten years, we have been working on a normative and descriptive grammar which, for the first time, is common to all countries.' (*El País* 2 March 2007)

Indeed, the *Nueva Gramática* is described frequently using the metaphor of a 'map of the whole language', emphasizing that there is a definite shape and territory of Spanish, which can – and indeed should – be mapped and navigated using the Academies' normative, panhispanic publications.

### **Panhispanic Language Policy (PLP)**

The framework within which the RAE has begun to supersede pluricentric norms with the pursuit of 'total Spanish' is the PLP. Launched in 2004 in close co-operation with the ASALE, this policy is a factor in realizing a sense of panhispanic community by promoting a shared common linguistic code across the Spanish-speaking world. The PLP finds expression in standardizing

publications, media discourse, collaborative projects and conferences such as the series of CILEs. The publications – dictionaries, grammars and orthography guides – serve the entire Spanish-speaking world with a definition of the Spanish language, that is, what it looks like and what shape it takes. Consequently these publications represent one stage in ‘the struggle to control language by defining its nature’ (Cameron 1995).

As part of a project requiring constant dialogue, the twenty-two Spanish Language Academies articulate a consensus that sets the common standard for all Spanish speakers in matters of vocabulary, grammar or spelling, harmonizing the unity of the language within its fruitful diversity. (La política lingüística panhispánica, [www.rae.es](http://www.rae.es))<sup>33</sup>

The PLP appears to respond (and contribute) to a ‘rescaling’ of relations between the RAE and Spanish-speakers in which the global scale may be ‘an ultimate horizon for action’ (Fairclough 2006: 34) for nation-states and multinational organizations. This rescaling is taking place for the RAE, and its domain of activity is no longer limited to nation-states, nor its activities to those of ‘cleansing, fixing and giving splendour’ to a nation-state based variety of Spanish. Instead, and perhaps above all, the focus of the PLP goes beyond this (with the collaboration of the Spanish American academies) in pursuit of global linguistic unity through a ‘common standard for all Spanish-speakers’.

Besides the Academies, Spain’s IC also serves the pursuit of the PLP’s objectives through contributing a commodified Spanish (see Mar-Molinero 2006a, 2006b) to the global linguistic market via its online and classroom-based courses. The IC’s teaching materials favour central peninsular Spanish because of its supposed purity and freedom from the effects of language contact and borrowings (Mar-Molinero 2006a: 85), yet these materials also present a disembedded, neutral, ‘panhispanic’ variety of Spanish in line with the PLP. In addition, the IC’s Curriculum Plan and the International Certification System (*Sistema Internacional de Certificación*) homogenize the content of courses taught beyond its many centres, and so are tools in the PLP which enable considerable control to be exercised by these few language authorities over what Spanish is and how it is taught. The correspondence between the goals of the PLP and the activities of the IC are made explicit in this recent excerpt from the *Instituto Cervantes*’ magazine:

The importance shown by the Colombia Congress to the idea of preserving unity in the diversity of Spanish is consistent with the line of action of the Cervantes Institute in its own policy of collaboration, to differing

degrees, with the institutions and education authorities of Latin American countries. . . . This line of panhispanic cooperation in relation to Spanish allows for the provision of initiatives of particular interest to practitioners in the field of Spanish as a foreign language in different countries of the Hispanic world. (Instituto Cervantes 2007: 41)<sup>34</sup>

In the same way that the Spanish Academy seeks to collaborate with and simultaneously lead the cohort of Hispanic Academies, the IC seeks to reinforce the panhispanic unity of Spanish through collaborating with and guiding language teaching institutions in the Americas and offering its curricula and accreditations in support of such objectives.

Summarizing this discussion of pluricentric Spanish, the reaction of the RAE – initially at least – appears to have been to accept and acknowledge the value of these norms and their differing centres of prestige. Nonetheless, the rise of discourse highlighting the commonality of a panhispanic code of Spanish – *el español común* – as well as the resulting language policy driven by the Academies and supported by Spain's government, businesses and IC, have shifted emphasis away from particular regional norms (subsumed within general classifications of *diversidad*) onto more general panhispanic linguistic unity and the all-encompassing 'total Spanish'. As Spanish-speaking areas increase around the world through high birth-rates, migration and language learning, the RAE's leadership in the PLP ensures that Spain benefits (in terms of prestige as well as economically) from the expansion of Spanish as a first, second and foreign language.

### To whom does Spanish 'belong'?

In the tradition of linguistic nationalism, language has consistently been linked to a particular territory, even if – as in the case of Spanish (and English, French, Portuguese, etc.) – it has spread through colonization and imperialism (Mar-Molinero 2006a, 2006b, Phillipson 1992). Throughout the Americas, Caribbean, Philippines and arguably much of the Iberian peninsula, Spanish is present in those territories by means of conquest and migration. With the sense of a colonial 'centre' or homeland came also the idea of a 'linguistic homeland' and 'capital', from which the language had evolved, to whom it belonged and where its 'purest' form was spoken. The way that this concept of a linguistic capital has been used in metalinguistic discourse has, as might be expected, changed

consistently with the social and political circumstances of the empire's centre and periphery. It is therefore important to understand the concept of 'ownership' of Spanish, and how the RAE sees this and debates it in the press.

### **Spain as a diminished linguistic power?**

The discourse of the RAE and its Academicians shows their awareness that Spain ranks low in terms of its population share of the Spanish-speaking world (approximately 10% of all native speakers).<sup>35</sup> This recognition leads to the view that:

The great success of the Academy's directors in recent years has been, in his opinion, to realize that 'it is no longer a single nationality that creates the language, but are 22 Latin American nations which are, in an ongoing way, creating.' (*ABC* 2 April 1997)<sup>36</sup>

The RAE's Luis María Anson, former editor of *ABC* and still a regular writer for the Spanish media, recognizes that whereas previously one group generated and regulated Spanish, that is no longer the case and now 22 distinct 'groups' of Spanish-speaking people use and create the language.

An *El País* editorial from the same period also uses the adverb 'ya' (now, already) to signify a break from the previous situation:

Spanish is a common good which no longer belongs even to Spain. (*El País* 7 April 1997)<sup>37</sup>

The inferred conclusion is that the ability and authority to create, define and benefit from the Spanish language is no longer limited to Spain. However, García de la Concha believes this is not a status quo that the 'former' linguistic power of Spain can easily accept:

The language left home long ago and we Spaniards still find it difficult to accept the idea that such a beloved daughter as the Spanish language will no longer depend on the parental home. Indeed, her life depends on others overseas. This was once again the reminder in Valladolid from the director of the Royal Spanish Academy, Victor Garcia de la Concha. (*ABC* 16 October 2001)<sup>38</sup>

Employing a metaphor of family appeals to the emotional understanding of readers who have experienced or can imagine such an event, and all the emotions involved in such a 'difficult' departure. The Spanish people, García de la

Concha believes, cannot get used to the idea that they are no longer the 'parental home' of the language. Then again, his use of metaphor paints the picture that the personified Spanish language made the decision to 'leave', which somewhat obscures the facts surrounding the initial spread of Spanish, that of the American colonization.

José Manuel Blecua (RAE secretary), made the following statement prior to the Fourth CILE and the launch of the panhispanic New Grammar book:

In this case the word in Castilian or Spanish, whichever you prefer, has no owner. 'To think that we own the Spanish language is a parochial view, unfair and untrue', says Jose Manuel Blecua, Secretary of the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE), in an interview with the readers of *elpais.com*. (*El País* 23 March 2007)<sup>39</sup>

The view that Spain 'owns' the language is represented by Blecua as 'parochial, unfair and untrue'. Consequently Blecua delegitimizes those who hold this view by positioning it in opposition to the presumably 'global', 'fair' and 'true' vision being constructed through moves towards panhispanic vision and policy.

Other examples from the press further serve to naturalize and embed in public discourse this sense of a definite change in Spain's relationship with the Spanish language:<sup>40</sup>

Since the sixteenth century, Spanish stopped being the language of just Spain to become the language of nearly an entire continent, and Spain. (*ABC* 10 April 1997)

America was instrumental in breaking the initial mould of Spanish. (*El País* 17 October 2001)

Spain is no longer the main reference in the use of language . . . 'this is a grammar which – for the first time – does not have Spain as a backbone.' (*El País* 24 March 2007)

The great pendulum of Spanish swings over ever wider fields than the Peninsula on which it was born. (*El País* 10 November 2005)

The new dictionary also eliminates the absurd sense of ownership that we Spaniards had over the language. (*ABC* 12 November 2005)

That time in which peninsular Spaniards could dictate what was correct is over. (*El País* 11 December 2005)

One Spanish, yes, but open, flexible, inclusive, which understands the language not as a privilege of Spain, but as embracing the numerous Latin

American realities. This has always been the goal of the director of the Royal Spanish Academy, Victor Garcia de la Concha. (*El País* 15 November 2005)

In one particular example, Blecua was asked to identify who produces the linguistic norm to which he had just referred. He stated that 'We now have to investigate that, we must know who produces the educated norm' (*El País* 19 October 2001).<sup>41</sup> He then suggested that 'prestigious writers, scientific texts, and above all, the media'<sup>42</sup> are all influential in creating and propagating the standard. These are supposedly disembodied professional groups with no particular links to specific Spanish-speaking countries. However, these professions are far more common in wealthier, more developed Spanish-speaking countries where scientific research funding and powerful international media organizations are commonly based.

So while the predominance of Spain as a model or leader of the standard language is frequently played down, and previous views of its primacy consigned to history, the alternative 'role-models' suggested by Blecua demonstrate how Spain continues to hold considerable functional influence because of the predominance of these standardizing bodies within its territory, and associated institutions in countries of a similar social and economic strength.

### **The shifting 'capitals' of Spanish**

The concept of a symbolic 'capital' of the Spanish language – while firmly rejected as being Madrid – has not entirely disappeared from language debates. On the contrary, there is a clear context in which a number of cities are given this important status and this is when a city hosts the International Congress of the Spanish Language. The following headlines show how the designation of 'capital' is repeated diachronically:<sup>43</sup>

The Mexican city of Zacatecas is the 'capital' of the Spanish language for five days (*El País* 7 April 1997)

Valladolid became the capital of the Spanish language (*ABC* 16 October 2001)

Rosario today becomes the capital of the Spanish language (*ABC* 17 November 2004)

Cartagena de Indias, capital of the Spanish language (*ABC* 26 March 2007)

An indicator of how this phrase has become naturalized is how in the first example, 'capital' appears in inverted commas, signalling the metaphorical nature



of the concept. In subsequent examples, there are no inverted commas, implying that the concept is not unusual, and has moved into the common-ground of belief. Interestingly, in *El País* the writer uses inverted commas whereas the *ABC* writer does not, which might also suggest a difference in attitude to the concept of a 'worldwide capital of the language' between the liberal *El País* and the conservative *ABC*, and the commitment of each to such a term.

By employing the metaphor of 'capital' to the host city of the CILE, a metaphorical importance is constructed for that particular city for the short duration (3–4 days) of the triennial conference. This suggests that in the symbolic geographical 'seat of power' sit the central authorities over the Spanish language, consisting of the Academies, the IC and the governmental leaders of the nation-states involved, not to mention the other 'language mavens' (Pinker 1995: 372) of the Spanish-speaking world invited to participate. It appears that whenever and wherever they are gathered in one place, there is sufficient concentration of prestige, power and decision-making to merit the title of 'capital', a reference to the nation-state framework in which a historically significant centre (arguably always a city) holds the majority of executive, legislative, judicial and commercial power. The presupposition here is that a similar framework can work for a linguistic community and its authorities.<sup>44</sup> On one hand, the idea of a 'capital' being wherever the language authorities are gathered suggests that language belongs not to a particular territory but to its guardians and speakers; this in turn reflects the ideology of 'Spanish from nowhere' and strengthens belief in one common narrative of 'the' Spanish language with common characteristics, challenges and opportunities. On the other hand, the discourse surrounding each CILE site focuses on celebrating the linguistic development and merits of the Spanish language which 'belong' in that place, which reflects more of a pluricentric ideology in which linguistic and sociolinguistic developments are happening constantly and concurrently across the Spanish-speaking world.

### **Spanish in the Americas**

In the previous sections, I have highlighted the tensions arising from discursive strategies which ostensibly move a monocentric 'capital' of Spanish away from Madrid/Spain and towards either a roving 'capital' representing a pluricentric set of norms, or a disembedded symbolic 'capital' which rests solely on assemblies of powerful linguistic (and other) authorities. Common to both of these strategies are references to the status of Spanish in the Americas as where the language is seen to be flourishing.

In one *ABC* editorial, the Spanish language is referred to as ‘an American language’ (*una lengua americana*), a referential strategy allowing the reader to believe that Spanish now belongs to the American continent/people. This also reinforces the idea – established in the texts below and in other examples<sup>45</sup> – that where the numerical bias of language-speakers lies, to some extent there too can be found the ‘ownership’ of the language:

A common cultural space that will become a media, economic, scientific, educational and technological territory. This is one of the successes of the organizers. The Congress has made clear that cooperative programmes must be created between Latin American nations (including the US and Brazil) to develop the vast wealth – cultural and otherwise – of the Spanish language which is now an American language. (*ABC* 20 October 2001)<sup>46</sup>

P. The first product of the Spanish-American collaboration. A milestone.

R. Consider the fact that of every ten people who speak Spanish, nine live in America. And the splendour of the literature written by Latin Americans in the twentieth century has helped us reach this point from which we can truly see the reality of the language. (Salvador, *El País* 10 November 2005)<sup>47</sup>

The development and spread of Spanish in America is a topic publicly highlighted by Academicians for its importance to the future of the language:<sup>48</sup>

If Spanish is so important today, it is largely thanks to America, where the majority of Spanish speakers reside. (Red, *ABC* 6 October 2001)

‘Twenty-first century Castilian will be whatever Latin Americans want it to be’, said Cebrián. He said that Spain could contribute much, but that it will be the force and growth of Latin American speakers who would mark out the path of the Spanish language in the future. (Cebrián, *El País* 20 November 2004)

So the concentration of Spanish-speakers in the Americas is fully recognized by the RAE and the Spanish press. As I noted earlier, however, the majority of Spanish-speaking America represents economic opportunities for Spanish language authorities – as well as the commercial entities with which it collaborates – due to Spain’s superior economic power (CIA 2011). The exception is the United States of America, and the growth of the Spanish-speaking community there could, in time, represent a threat to Spain’s hegemony over the language tourism industry. It is therefore feasible that part of the RAE’s thinking in its leadership of the PLP is to ‘keep the enemy within’, that is, incorporate the US Spanish language authorities into the Spain-led policy and ensure that the IC (with five centres

in the United States of America and plans for more) establishes leadership of Spanish as a foreign language education.

### 'La lengua de todos'

As the Spanish government and business elites – in co-operation with the Academies and IC – have come to recognize the enormous potential of Spanish as a lucrative and important commercial commodity, its convergence into a presentable 'item' for sale through definitive publications and language courses has taken place. This commodity – and commodification more generally – suggests that the producers and marketers of global Spanish exercise some degree of ownership, akin to a copyright or patent. In spite of this, competing discourses coming even from within the Academies seek to obscure this concept of ownership and deflect suggestions that language ownership is either a motivation or goal of their activities. The unified Spanish language (*el español común*) is, as we have discussed, constructed as a 'space' in which speakers encounter one another and participate in a 'possession of all' (*patrimonio de todos*).<sup>49</sup> Participation and ownership in this, then, is extended by RAE discourse to include as wide an 'ownership' as possible, emphasizing that language belongs to speakers, not to academies, or organizations:<sup>50</sup>

Every language is violated and penetrated. Those who do this are not the institutions, but the speakers. (Cebrián, *El País* 20 November 2004)

Spanish 'is the language of all, whether Spanish or Americans, neither more of one than the others, nor vice versa'. (*ABC* 8 April 1997)

King Juan Carlos, who closed the event, highlighted the importance of Spanish as a 'common heritage of over four million people', and as an 'irreplaceable tool to empower the Hispanic community in the global community'. . . . This future means that Spanish 'has before it a long history with prestigious pages still to be written. It is a language that is enriched by the contributions, voices and turns brought by men and women who inhabit this vast linguistic universe'. (*El País* 17 October 2001)<sup>51</sup>

We can deduce from this that the RAE and ASALE see the Spanish language as belonging to its speakers, and thus represents the common ownership of language as the 'homeland of all'. Language is considered to be general, disembedded from any territory, and global in scope, unity and variety. As a result, in its attempts to assign agency ('blame?') for the innovation and direction of language to lay speakers, the RAE obfuscates its own influence and power over decisions on the

acceptability of norms. What should be clear from the analysis thus far is that the ideology in which language authorities become anonymous, and in which when they do act it is merely to record the norms of the speakers themselves,<sup>52</sup> does not alter the fact that public discourse on norms is shaped primarily by those institutions claiming language authority. When the Academy standardizes (or rejects) a linguistic usage in its publications or press discourse, it does more than simply note or record the language of the ordinary person on the street: it actually engages in a contestation over the ultimate authority for language norms and consequently to whom language belongs. García de la Concha demonstrates something of the RAE's conflicting discourse when he says that: 'All we have done is to be attentive to what we hear on the street, making it our own and returning it to language users as a set of norms' (*El País* 10 November 2005).<sup>53</sup> In setting particular norms – however necessary these might be for the communicative, transactional functions of a global Spanish – the Academy (and the Academies following its lead) stamps a particular mark on language standards according to the language ideologies it simultaneously attempts to negate. It is somewhat misleading then to obscure agency for standardization by suggesting that both the language of 'la calle' and that of the 'lengua culta' belong to speakers, when it is in fact a product of standardization by a very particular and arguably biased group of (predominantly male) highly educated, privileged individuals.

## Summary

Summing up this chapter then, it has become clear that the RAE's press discourse on Spanish in the world utilizes strategies that promote key themes and topoi (argumentational strategies). These focus primarily on the number of Spanish-speakers worldwide, the action and process of the growth and spread of Spanish, the communicative and economic advantages of linguistic unity, the historical rootedness of Spanish and its future golden age in hitherto unconsolidated domains such as diplomacy, technology and science. Furthermore, ideological vocabulary, presuppositions, categorizations and truth claims embedded in vocabulary constitute a lexical strategy for the construction of the RAE's view of Spanish in the world. Among the effects of these strategies is first the manufacture of public consent to the RAE's (and associated language guardians') renewed leadership of the 'new' standardization of Spanish which now affects language on a rescaled international level. Secondly, RAE discourse manufactures consent to the public linguistic and social practices of 'natural' and 'necessary'

standardization which mask the hidden agenda of ensuring that Spain benefits from the expansion of Spanish into the domains mentioned above.

The RAE seeks to recognize and control the shape and perception of pluricentric Spanish by controlling the definition of its various norms. Having evolved from a monocentric norm from Spain, through the amalgamation of all peninsular and American varieties into dichotomized 'Spanish' versus 'American' norms, the RAE has since classified seven regional norms on which standardizing research and publications such as the Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts and the New Grammar are based. It now seems, however, that RAE discourse has come full circle to once again promoting a single, prestigious overarching norm, whose prestige comes not from any (explicit) territorial link but from its unified status across the Spanish-speaking world and hence its 'anonymity'. It remains the duty of the RAE and the ASALE to guard *el español común* and to guarantee its essential unity. Unified Spanish is framed as an alternative to the hegemony of global English with this alternative premised on a hegemonic standardized global Spanish established in reaction to the threat of linguistic borrowings from – or shift to – English and the potential fragmentation of Spanish.

Finally, this chapter has discussed the concept of the 'ownership' of Spanish, showing how this no longer lies with Spain (according to the RAE and others). Language debates indicate that Spain has long since ceased to be the 'parental home' of Spanish, and now no territorial group is seen to own the language. Instead, those who have most influence over the shape and direction of the language are those in science, literature and the media, representing a shift from a formerly nation-state based philosophy of language ownership to one in which the international architects, craftsmen and users of Spanish are those to whom Spanish 'belongs'. This chapter noted that there is a concentration of these professional and cultural authorities in the economically superior Spanish-speaking nation-states, raising serious questions – if not doubts – about the authenticity of discourse promoting 'democracy' in linguistic authority. In other parts of language debates, cities in which the CILEs take place are metaphorically transformed into 'capitals' of the language, each representing the incumbent seat of linguistic power as resting in these conferences and their participants. Most commonly, however, ownership of Spanish is deflected from identifiable institutional or national agents onto the common linguistic 'patrimonio de todos' in which all users and speakers of Spanish are attributed a share in the ownership and (re)production of the language. This notion of shared heritage reinforces the ideology of a panhispanic 'Spanish from nowhere' which nevertheless continues to be debated, constructed and standardized by the language authorities guided by the RAE.

## Notes

- 1 El siguiente paso de los países iberoamericanos sólo puede ser uno: 'Conseguir que el siglo XXI sea el siglo del español', dijo César Antonio Molina (*El País* 22 November 2004).
- 2 'crecimiento asombroso' de esta lengua, no sólo en cuanto a su número de hablantes, sino también por lo que se refiere a su despliegue en la literatura.'
- 3 ¿Serán necesarios muchos más congresos? . . . 'Sí, porque hay que tener conciencia del valor de la lengua', nos dijo el vicedirector de la Española, Gregorio Salvador. ¿Y no corremos el riesgo de crear lo que dijo Nebrija, que la lengua y el imperio es lo mismo y que caen juntos? '¡Pero eso lo dijo con respecto al Imperio Romano, y fue de otro tiempo!'
- 4 *El País* 19 November 2004, 7 September 2004, 20 November 2004.
- 5 'La proyección económica del español depende de la conquista de las nuevas tecnologías.'
- 6 *El Congreso de Cartagena de Indias concluye con el reconocimiento de la expansión del español*. El IV Congreso Internacional de la Lengua Española, que ha concluido este jueves en Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), ha puesto de manifiesto que el español se ha consolidado como lengua de comunicación universal y de la unidad iberoamericana. 'Estamos con una lengua extraordinariamente unida y trabada, lo que constituye una enorme fortaleza para contribuir a su expansión', expresó el director de la Real Academia Española (RAE), Víctor García de la Concha, en el acto de clausura.
- 7 P. ¿Cómo proteger el español frente al poderío del inglés? R. Lo primero que tenemos que hacer es una expansión de la lengua española.
- 8 A particularly interesting phrase referred to the process of 'the internationalization of Spanish', which was the title of the final section of the Third CILE in Rosario, and was much-publicized and debated in both *El País* and *ABC* (*El País* 14 November 2004, 17 November 2004, 20 November 2004, 21 November 2004; *ABC* 17 November 2004, 20 November 2004).
- 9 La voluntad del congreso, o de quienes lo han organizado, es lograr una integración para articular estos dos mundos de la búsqueda de perfiles propios, de peculiaridades, de rasgos regionales y, por otro lado, esta necesaria expansión de la lengua, con elementos generales, elementos internacionales para que pueda competir en un mercado, inclusive el lingüístico, con otras lenguas como el inglés.
- 10 El cultivo y la expansión de nuestra lengua en el mundo – objetivo al que también concurren como protagonistas los medios de comunicación – deben seguir centrando nuestros esfuerzos comunes e ilusiones colectivas.
- 11 'Creo que el español es la lengua del siglo XXI, y todos debemos esforzarnos para asegurar su definitiva consolidación y proyección.'

- 12 *García de la Concha defiende una política lingüística panhispánica.* (*El País* 8 February 2006); *III CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE LA LENGUA ESPAÑOLA: Una sesión de conclusiones sin demasiadas conclusiones* (*El País* 21 November 2004).
- 13 'Esta gran congregación es un buen síntoma si a esto le siguen políticas de apoyo y promoción de la lengua, un gran patrimonio de los hispanohablantes, para que adquiera una importancia no sólo cultural, sino también política y económica,' destacó el novelista (*El País* 16 October 2001).
- 14 El Rey afirmó que Cien años de soledad 'es en sí mismo un ejemplo vivo de la unidad del español en su diversidad'; una lengua en expansión pero que para consolidarse requiere una mayor presencia en la ciencia y en organismos internacionales, 'donde no se la reconoce como merece por el contingente de sus hablantes,' según Víctor García de la Concha, presidente de la Real Academia Española y del comité científico del congreso.
- 15 En el siglo XXI -indicó- habrá tres lenguas, tres idiomas que la persona culta necesitará conocer: el inglés, el español y la informática.
- 16 El siguiente paso de los países iberoamericanos sólo puede ser uno: 'Conseguir que el siglo XXI sea el siglo del español'.
- 17 La lengua española, la industria del siglo XXI: ... 'es la mejor industria del siglo XXI, nuestra principal materia prima'.
- 18 El siglo XXI habla español y lo hará cada vez más.
- 19 'El castellano del siglo XXI será lo que los latinoamericanos quieran que sea,' afirmó Cebrián. También dijo que España podía aportar mucho, pero que era el empuje y el crecimiento de los hablantes latinoamericanos los que marcarían las trazas de la lengua en el futuro. Destacó el trabajo de las academias a la hora de consensuar la norma, indicó que la eficacia del Instituto Cervantes pasa por su internacionalización, reclamó un intenso diálogo con Brasil y explicó que había que estar muy atentos con la situación del spanglish.
- 20 '[E]l futuro del español dependerá del peso social y, sobre todo, cultural de la población hispanohablante. Es imprescindible su propia fuerza expansiva'.
- 21 For example, when the Third CILE opened in Rosario, *El País* foregrounded this historical topos with the headline *El idioma de Cervantes, frente a la globalización* (*El País* 14 November 2004) which collocates the past glorious writer of the Spanish language with the present and future context of the globalized world.
- 22 'Capital Museística del Castellano'
- 23 ... Alcalá es una ciudad a la que le sobran títulos históricos y literarios para tener relieve en las actividades relacionadas con la lengua, pero por ello le urge emprender una acción así en beneficio del español.
- 24 El alcalde, Manuel Peinado, justificó el proyecto en que 'Alcalá está en el pasado de la lengua castellana y debe estar también en su futuro'.
- 25 'la influencia ejercida por la ciudad "sobre la forma y el uso del español"'

- 26 ... hemos presentado el Diccionario panhispánico de dudas, una obra consensuada paso a paso, en pie de igualdad, desde la conciencia de que la norma del español es policéntrica y que es deber de las Academias abrir los oídos a la pluralidad de las voces y la inteligencia y el corazón al propósito de robustecimiento de la unidad del idioma.
- 27 ... las normas de uso del español varían de unos lugares a otros. Depende de donde hable unas cosas se dicen de una manera u otra, y las dudas seguirán existiendo. Este diccionario ayudará a despejarlas.
- 28 Huyamos de eso, por favor. Aquí se ha reconocido la legitimidad de todas las variantes que existen: el porteño vale igual que el madrileño. Y se ha aceptado que hay una norma abstracta muy flexible, que es la norma culta, la lengua estándar, la que se puede entender en todos lados.
- 29 'se desvincula del tradicional "centralismo peninsular"'.  
30 *Neutro*. ... Y la eterna controversia, claro, del español neutro. 'Escribimos el español común y luego las variantes, que pueden corresponder al caribe insular, al español de Río de la Plata o al español de Asturias o de Murcia', asegura el ponente. 'Esta gramática es un retrato del idioma: muestra lo que compartimos y lo que nos diferencia.'
- 31 'Una visión completa del español' (*El País* 10 November 2005); 'tiene como gran novedad el afrontar la gramática no sólo del español peninsular, de España, sino del español total' (*ABC* 29 November 2005); El IV Congreso de la Lengua analizará la diversidad del español 'Es una novedad. Por primera vez tendremos una gramática del español total, no sólo del español peninsular' (*El País* 29 March 2006); 'una gramática del español total, no sólo de España' (*ABC* 19 September 2006); 'será la primera gramática del español total' (*El País* 1 March 2007); '[La Nueva Gramática] "Es descriptiva y normativa. Aborda el español total y está elaborada en un plano de igualdad en todo el mundo" indicó García de la Concha' (*ABC* 2 March 2007).
- 32 DPD 'para ofrecer una respuesta unitaria a cualquier castellanohablante' (*El País* 22 November 2001); 'una respuesta unitaria consensuada por todas las Academias de la Lengua Española' (Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española 2004: 9);  
Las Academias de la Lengua española despejan hoy las dudas de todos los hablantes del mundo (*ABC* 13 October 2004); '*La lengua española, industria del siglo XXI* "... desde hace diez años, hemos estado trabajando en una gramática normativa y descriptiva común, por primera vez, a todos los países"' (*El País* 2 March 2007).
- 33 En una tarea de intercambio permanente, las veintidós Academias de la Lengua Española articulan un consenso que fija la norma común para todos los hispanohablantes en cuestiones de léxico, de gramática o de ortografía, armonizando la unidad del idioma con la fecunda diversidad en que se realiza.
- 34 La importancia que se ha dado en el Congreso de Colombia a la idea de preservar la unidad en la diversidad del español es coherente con la línea de acción del



Instituto Cervantes en su política de colaboración, en distintos órdenes, con las instituciones y las autoridades educativas de los países hispanoamericanos. . . .

Esta línea de colaboración panhispánica en el ámbito del español permite situar iniciativas de particular interés para los profesionales del ámbito del español como lengua extranjera de los diferentes países del ámbito hispánico.

- 35 Today there are slightly more than 400 million Spanish-speakers, of which only a tenth are in Spain. In demographic terms, the language is much more American than Spanish / Hoy son algo más de 400 millones los hispanohablantes; de ellos sólo la décima parte corresponden a España. En términos demográficos es una lengua mucho más americana que española (*El País* 17 October 2001); Nine out of ten speakers are in America, in the United States more people speak Spanish than in our own country / Nueve de cada diez hablantes están en América, en Estados Unidos hablan español más personas que en nuestro país (*ABC* 16 November 2004); Consider the fact that of every ten people who speak Spanish, nine live in America / Piense usted que de cada 10 personas que hablan español, 9 viven en América (*El País* 10 November 2005); In Spain, we are 10 per cent of the Spanish-speaking world (Mexico has more than one hundred million) / En España hablamos español el 10 por 100 de los hispanohablantes del mundo (México tiene más de cien millones) (*ABC* 23 March 2007).
- 36 El gran acierto de los últimos años de los directores de la Academia ha sido, en su opinión, darse cuenta de que 'ya no es un solo pueblo el que crea el idioma, sino que son 22 pueblos iberoamericanos los que están, de una manera permanente, creándolo'.
- 37 El español es un bien común que ya no pertenece siquiera a España.
- 38 Se fue de casa hace tiempo y aun así a los españoles nos cuesta hacernos a la idea de que una hija tan querida como la lengua española ya no volverá a depender del hogar paterno. Es más, su vida depende de otros allende el mar. Así lo volvió a recordar ayer en Valladolid el director de la Real Academia Española, Víctor García de la Concha.
- 39 En este caso la palabra en castellano o español, a gusto del consumidor, no tiene dueño. 'Pensar que los españoles somos dueños de la lengua es una visión provinciana, injusta y no es verdad,' así lo asegura José Manuel Blecua, Secretario de la Real Academia Española (RAE), en una entrevista mantenida con los lectores de *ELPAIS.com*.
- 40 'desde el siglo XVI, el español dejó de ser el idioma sólo de España para convertirse en el idioma de casi todo un continente, y de España' (*ABC* 10 April 1997); América fue definitiva para que el español rompiera su moldura inicial (*El País* 17 October 2001); España deja de ser el principal referente en el uso del lenguaje . . . 'Es una gramática . . . en la que por vez primera España no es eje vertebrador' (*El País* 24 March 2007); El gran péndulo del español abarca con su movimiento campos

- cada vez más anchos que la Península en que nació (*El País* 10 November 2005); El nuevo diccionario, además, elimina el absurdo sentimiento de propiedad que los españoles teníamos sobre la lengua (*ABC* 12 November 2005); Ya se acabó el tiempo en que los españoles de la península dictaban lo que era correcto (*El País* 12 November 2005); Un solo español, sí, pero abierto, flexible, integrador, que entiende la lengua no como un privilegio de España, sino que abraza la múltiple realidad iberoamericana, como ha sido siempre el objetivo del director de la Real Academia Española, Víctor García de la Concha (*El País* 15 November 2005)
- 41 P. ¿Y quién [la] determina [la norma culta]? R. Ahora hay que investigar eso, hay que saber quién hace la norma culta (*El País* 19 October 2001).
- 42 'los escritores prestigiosos, los textos científicos y, sobre todo, los medios.'
- 43 La ciudad mexicana de Zacatecas será la 'capital' del español durante cinco días (*El País* 7 April 1997); Valladolid se convierte en la capital del español (*ABC* 16 October 2001); Rosario se erige hoy en capital del español (*ABC* 17 November 2004); Cartagena de Indias, capital del español (*ABC* 26 March 2007).
- 44 A similar construction of linguistically important geographical space takes place when key events other than the Congresses are held in particular cities, such as the meeting of the 22 Academies in Medellín, Colombia, prior to the Congress, and even the fictitious city of Macondo which features in the works of celebrated writer Gabriel García Márquez: 'The excitement brought by the passage of time and 10 years of collaborative work between the 22 Academies have made Medellín the city of words' / 'La expectación que ha traído el paso del tiempo y el trabajo de 10 años conjunto entre las 22 academias han situado a *Medellín como ciudad de la palabra*' (*El País* 23 March 2007); Don Juan Carlos names Macondo 'a place of Spanish language' / *Don Juan Carlos sitúa a Macondo como 'un lugar de la lengua española'* (*ABC* 27 March 2007).
- 45 Nueve de cada diez hablantes del español se encuentran al otro lado del Atlántico. *El español es ya una lengua americana*, de ahí su irreversible presencia emergente en Estados Unidos y su cada vez más fuerte demanda en Brasil. Lo que hoy da sentido al español en el mundo es su proyección atlántica, y donde España tiene una baza imponente de promoción es, precisamente, más allá de cualquier otra actividad económica, industrial o cultural, en el apoyo y mimo de la lengua como base y vertebración de su presencia internacional (*ABC* 12 October 2001); Hoy son algo más de 400 millones los hispanohablantes; de ellos sólo la décima parte corresponden a España. En términos demográficos es una lengua mucho más americana que española. Como ha señalado el escritor y académico Mario Vargas Llosa, América fue definitiva para que el español rompiera su moldura inicial (*El País* 17 October 2001); El español está alcanzando cotas verdaderamente importantes. En Estados Unidos hay ahora mismo 32 millones de hispanohablantes, y esto excluye a los hispanos que han perdido su idioma original. Dentro de 45 años

- es muy probable que haya cerca de 100 millones. En México, en la actualidad hay 101 millones, y en Brasil se espera que en los próximos años se llegue a 30 millones (López Morales, *El País* 9 November 2005); En América tenemos el mayor caudal de hispanohablantes (Barcia – Pdte de la Academia Argentina, *El País* 14 November 2004).
- 46 Un espacio cultural común que se traducirá en un territorio mediático, económico, científico, educativo y tecnológico. He ahí uno de los aciertos de los organizadores. Para ello, este Congreso ha dejado claro que deben crearse programas de cooperación entre las naciones iberoamericanas -con la inclusión de Estados Unidos y Brasil- para desarrollar esa inmensa riqueza, no sólo cultural, que el idioma español -que es ya una lengua americana- significa.
- 47 P. Primer trabajo de consenso América-España. Un hito.  
R. Piense usted que de cada 10 personas que hablan español, 9 viven en América. Y el esplendor de la literatura hecha por latinoamericanos en el siglo XX ayudó a que desde aquí se vislumbrara de veras la realidad de la lengua.
- 48 ... si el español tiene hoy tanta importancia, es en gran medida gracias a América, donde están la mayoría de los hispanohablantes (Rojo, *ABC* 6 October 2001); 'El castellano del siglo XXI será lo que los latinoamericanos quieran que sea', afirmó Cebrián. También dijo que España podía aportar mucho, pero que era el empuje y el crecimiento de los hablantes latinoamericanos los que marcarían las trazas de la lengua en el futuro (Cebrián, *El País* 20 November 2004).
- 49 García de la Concha replied that the aim is the unity of language and told the media that Spanish is 'the homeland of all' and that it is heading towards 'a further strengthening of its unity' thanks to the work of all Spanish language academies. / García de la Concha le respondió que lo que se persigue es la unidad del idioma y manifestaba a los medios que el español es 'la patria de todos' y que se encamina a 'un mayor fortalecimiento de su unidad' gracias al trabajo de todas las Academias de habla española (*El País* 28 September 2001).
- 50 Toda lengua es violada y penetrada. Los que la hacen no son las instituciones, sino los hablantes (Cebrián, *El País* 20 November 2004); el español 'es la lengua de todos, españoles y americanos, ni nuestra más que vuestra ni al revés.' (*ABC* 8 April 1997)
- 51 El rey Juan Carlos, que cerró el acto, resalto la importancia del español como 'patrimonio común de más de cuatrocientos millones de personas', y como 'herramienta insustituible para potenciar la comunidad hispanohablante en el concierto de las naciones.' ... En este futuro, el español 'tiene ante si una historia larga con paginas prestigiosas aun por escribir. Es un idioma que se enriquece con las aportaciones, voces y giros que le aportan los hombres y mujeres que pueblan este inmenso universo lingüístico'.
- 52 Because it is well known that the standard is not made by scholars but by speakers. The Academy and the Association of Academies fulfil the role of a notary or

registrar: they open their eyes and ears to see and hear what relatively educated Spanish-speakers are saying, and what they consider to be right, wrong, cultured, colloquial or vulgar. And the Academy fix this in the body, the changing living organism that is the Spanish Language. / Porque la norma – es bien sabido – no la hacen los académicos sino los hablantes. La Academia y la Asociación de Academias cumplen una función notarial o registral: abren sus ojos y sus oídos para ver y oír lo que el pueblo hispanohablante, en un nivel medio de cultura, considera correcto o incorrecto, culto, coloquial o vulgar. Y lo fijan en el cuerpo, cambiante como organismo vivo que es, del sistema de la Lengua española (García de la Concha 2008: 1).

- 53 ‘Lo único que hemos hecho es estar atentos a lo que oímos en la calle, hacerlo nuestro y devolvérselo a los hablantes en forma de norma.’

## Conclusion

Taking as my starting position the belief that ideology is inescapably present in language, and that ideologies *about* language are present *in* language, the aim of this book has been to address two overarching concerns that illustrate the contemporary relationship between ideologies, institutions and media discourse in the Spanish-speaking world. The first concern has been to account for the ideological and political factors that impact upon, and inform, both public debates about language standardization and the debates and practices of standardizing institutions and agencies (such as the RAE) themselves. The second concern has been to analyse the nature of the ideological debates and discursive contestations surrounding so-called standard Spanish, debates which are driven by the changing role of the RAE as an authority on Spanish around the global community that speaks the language, and not just in Spain where the Academy is based.

The specific theoretical focus of this book is related to a particular set of ideologies, namely 'ideologies of language', which reflect 'the intersection of language and human beings in a social world' (Woolard 1998). These language ideologies offer insights into individual and institutional representations of the historical, contemporary and future role of a language in its socio-political context, as well as its perceived usefulness, value and prestige (or lack of these). This book has, among other things, traced how ideologies about Spanish have historically emerged from its literary golden age and its spread throughout Spain's former colonies, not to mention its role in discourses of nationalism and unity from the times of the Catholic Monarchs, through the Franco dictatorship, to the most recent negotiations establishing the multilingual Spanish state during the transition to democracy of the late 1970s and 1980s. In order to locate language ideologies, Woolard (1998) argues that we need to

look at three particular domains: linguistic practices, metapragmatic discourse and implicit metapragmatics (Woolard 1998). All three domains correlate with the contexts in which institutions such as the RAE establish and ritualize their ideologies and definitions of language,<sup>1</sup> embedding these ideologies in the texts and metatexts that constitute language ideological debates (Blommaert 1999b). As well as identifying the underlying ideologies of such debates, sociolinguists and other analysts must identify the 'ideological brokers' who hold authority to establish and occupy discursive space for these debates (1999b: 7–9) and the specific instruments by which they achieve this (1999a: 426). All too often both the particular agents and their means of establishing linguistic and ideological hegemony are veiled behind discourses of authority and anonymity in public spheres (Woolard 2007), and for this reason I have not only focused on the RAE, but have also identified others who exercise control and influence over language practices and debates in the Spanish context. I have found that an identifiable network of institutions exists in Spain, including not only the Academy and its close associate the IC, but also media outlets on television, radio and increasingly the internet. These institutions and their outputs serve to provoke reflection on individual linguistic practices and usages, inferring or even explicitly stating the need to classify these according to the 'correct/incorrect' dichotomy. Importantly, the RAE and IC are both strongly connected to the Spanish government and hence to its range of state policies on language, including Constitutional articles and the public education system. While these state-level language planning efforts are extensive, newspapers (and increasingly, internet versions of them) remain crucial for the widespread propagation of language and other ideologies across broad geographical areas and social classes. It follows that the continued presence and influence of the RAE in the public discursive space of the press is considered vital for the promotion and perpetuation of its authority and standardization discourse.

Standardization of language in many societies has taken as its model the written form of the spoken language of educated and powerful social elites, and this is the case in both Spain and the Latin American Spanish-speaking countries. This ideology of standardization points to a process in which constant intervention through language planning efforts has ensured the continued unity and cohesion of the Spanish language, and subsequently of the political and 'fraternal' community which is seen as a consequence of the common language. This written model of a standard language traditionally displays minimal variation in form and maximal variation in function across the territory in which it is used, an end which is achieved by means of the selection, codification,

elaboration and acceptance of the language (Haugen 1972). According to this taxonomy, the standardization of Spanish has taken place through: elevating an elite variety throughout the worldwide community of speakers, which was historically Castilian and is nowadays *el español común* (selection); securing conventions on the orthography, lexis and grammar of the selected variety through the publications of the RAE and ASALE (codification); extending the domains in which the language is used, as in debates about Spanish in technology, diplomacy, and so on (elaboration); and enlarging the number of speakers of this standardized Spanish as is the purpose of the education systems of Spanish-speaking countries as well as the global mission of Spain's IC (acceptance). Although Haugen's approach was written with the national context in mind, his model is still pertinent to an explanation of standardization processes in the contemporary transnational context of the Spanish-speaking 'community'. Within this language community of more than 400 million speakers, standardization practices and public debates involve 'verbal hygienists' (Cameron 1995) which do include 'lay' Spanish-speakers but are led primarily by key public figures from the RAE, IC, Fundación del Español Urgente and other prescriptivists from the mass media. These, then, are the institutions that control and influence 'standard' Spanish. The historical and prestigious role of Spain's Academy in particular has afforded it a privileged position in the national press debates about Spanish but also in international standardization practices, and this is increasingly the case. The series of high-profile CILE events as well as leadership of the now panhispanic publications that codify 'total Spanish' are manifestations of the RAE's hegemonic position and practices. They are also evidence of the continuation of its standardizing practices across a rescaled, international panhispanic community of speakers.

Having established the institutional and ideological framework within which the public language debates of Spanish authorities take place, a further aim of this book has been to specify the nature of these debates, and to understand the particular ways in which these authorities actively construct their vision through linguistic and discursive means. My analysis of institutional discourse draws on both the explicit content and implicit features of the textual data in order to reveal how hegemonic ideologies are embedded in and dispersed through texts and discourses in the Spanish press. This analysis considers the overall framing of the debates as well as the way that the texts encode language ideologies and the 'hidden agendas' (Cameron 2001) of the RAE and associated language authorities. Cameron's argument that language guardians engage in the 'struggle to control language by defining its nature' (1995: 8) underpins my consideration of how the

Spanish language is defined and described in press debates. The description of Spanish as one, common, unified language is naturalized by the RAE through its frequent designation of the language using terms of 'unity' and 'cohesion'. These characteristics are foregrounded in RAE discourse through their position as the topic (and often the title or subtitle) of many articles. The definition of Spanish as necessarily common to all speakers of its community has its roots in linguistic nationalism; in the contemporary context, however, the scope of this unity goes far beyond Spain to include nation-states where Spanish has official status, and even some where it does not but where it is used to perform significant and evermore interesting roles, such as the United States and Brazil. As such, this panhispanic definition of Spanish is transnational in its scope, and draws on legitimizing values of democracy, globalization and transnational identity.

In addition to controlling the perception of the language itself, the RAE's discourse embraces and promotes a particular definition of the speakers of Spanish, categorizing them as one 'community'. This community is staked out and reinforced by political and diplomatic unions (e.g. *Comunidad Iberoamericana de Naciones*) as well as linguistic and cultural events (*Congresos Internacionales de la Lengua Española*), but the common discursive theme is that its many members all share this common language (*la lengua común*) as a language of encounter, harmony and democracy (as they are believed to have done throughout the history of Spanish and its spread). This vision of social relationships between speakers of *el español común* is embedded in press debates through choices of inclusive grammar and lexis, creating a sense of belonging to an 'in-group' or 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983). Furthermore, in discourse where *el español común* is referred to as ordered, unified and common across the language community, the linguistic diversity of the Spanish-speaking world – occasionally recognized elsewhere – becomes part of the discursive background in order to maintain 'unity' as the topic of the foreground. Notwithstanding some recognition of linguistic diversity within Spanish-speaking territories, the bulk of RAE discourse on *el español común* infers that minimal variation in form (Haugen 1972) is highly valued within this particular supranational code for purposes of linguistic unity and widespread communication. This common variety of Spanish is consequently disembedded from particular territorial contexts, labelled as 'panhispanic', and subsequently comes to represent a 'Spanish from nowhere' that transcends national linguistic varieties and loyalties. At work here is an ideology of anonymity (Woolard 2007) in which the agency of Spain-based institutions, policies and practices is obscured in pursuit of an agentless, naturally occurring, 'total Spanish' guided by panhispanic norms.



Contradictions exist in some institutional ideologies, as Blommaert (1999b) suggests is relatively common. On the one hand, the RAE promotes and naturalizes the idea of a disembedded global norm as if this were somehow not linked to or 'owned' by any particular authority, but merely 'noticed' as a linguistic reality by the Academies and described in their publications. Yet on the other hand this norm is not merely described but is instead prescribed and determined by the specific, identifiable, nationally embedded language guardians of Spain. This comes as a result of the RAE reacting to the various norms of pluricentric Spanish by elevating a supposedly 'anonymous' variety of Spanish over and above the various pluricentric varieties. This overarching panhispanic norm has been gaining prestige over the past few years by virtue of its unified status across the Spanish-speaking world, and it is a norm that is predicated in press discourse on values of unity and the linguistic, social and economic advantages of a common standard language variety. While according to the RAE's view, *el español común* has no identifiable national 'owners' (only influential professional groups from science, literature and the media), this book has shown that the RAE's discourse legitimates the institution's own role and authority in standardization by presenting itself as the guarantor of this essential unity of Spanish. Indeed, the RAE discursively constructs and promotes its role in language matters through a topical and lexical focus on not only its historical function and service to Spanish-speakers, but also its contemporary role of *primus inter pares* among the other Spanish Language Academies.

At the same time as elevating *el español común*, the Academies have also categorized the diversity of Spanish varieties into a schema of what they believe to be the seven particular norms in the Spanish-speaking world. These centres of prestige (United States of America, Mexico and Central America, the Caribbean islands, continental Caribbean, the Andean zone, River Plate, and Chile) form the basis of the corpus planning that the Academies engage in when producing the *Panhispanic Dictionary of Doubts and the New Grammar*, yet these publications – and discussion of them in the press – are couched in terms of unity and panhispanism rather than diversity and pluricentrism. We see, then, how the unified practices of the Academies via the PLP and the categorization of pluricentric Spanish norms actually contribute more towards the power of the Academies to control the development of *el español común* through panhispanic norms than it does towards the full recognition of Spanish pluricentrism and the valorization of this.

On the concept of 'unity' as a characteristic of the language, RAE discourse does not only regularly focus on this, but also presents it as a determining factor

in the institution's own role and authority: a *raison d'être* for the contemporary Academy. Even though the RAE's motto 'cleanse, fix and make splendid' (*limpia, fija y da esplendor*) still appears on its heraldic logo, it claims to no longer pursue this goal, seeking instead to guard the essential unity of Spanish throughout the world. In recent years, the RAE has concentrated its practices and public discourse on the maintenance and protection of unified Spanish, as well as highlighting the involvement of the other Academies in this standardization of *el español común*. Although a combination of explicit declarations and metaphorical representations in press discourse suggest that the Academies' work on panhispanic norms is primarily descriptive, there remains no doubt that the RAE's mandate to ensure that linguistic diversity should not fracture the essential unity of Spanish means that this institution functions prescriptively too. However, there is more at stake than simply the RAE's perceived threat of linguistic fragmentation: the unificatory role of the Spanish language in the political, diplomatic and commercial union of the global Spanish-speaking community represents an implicit motive or 'hidden agenda' for which the RAE strives to manufacture public consent. Neo-liberal framings of the RAE's discourse emerge from the data in this book, revealing evidence of capitalist economic ideologies relating to markets, including a 'linguistic market'. In this context, there are supposedly invisible and inevitable market forces which are framed as representing legitimizing factors for the commodification and continued spread of the Spanish language through industries of language teaching and 'language tourism', particularly when the purpose of this whole industry frames global/general/total Spanish as an alternative to the hegemony of global English. Enabling and fomenting the ideological spread of Spanish as a 'commodity' is presented as a desirable – and often the only – option, and argumentation strategies regarding the economic value of Spanish, its profitability, and its representation as an industry are presented as justification for the work of the RAE and IC, as well as further inter-Academic collaboration. The RAE, along with a number of multinational companies, has enthusiastically entered into this revamped programme of language management on a global scale, through the detailed observation of language and the subsequent production of dictionaries, grammars and orthography guides that aim to bring clarity to doubts about usage, as well as control of what does and does not count as 'legitimate' Spanish around the world.

Ideological debates regarding Spanish in the world focus on themes such as the global number of speakers, the growth and influence of Spanish in powerful international contexts, the communicative and economic advantage of linguistic unity, and a necessary and upcoming 'golden age' in which Spanish

will conquer hitherto unconsolidated domains such as the internet, scientific scholarship, technological advances and international diplomacy (evidence of Haugen's maximal variety of function, 1972). This extension of Spanish is once again premised on the need to counter the 'threat' of global English, and relies on a hegemonic standardized global Spanish being established in response (or arguably, reaction) to the threat of linguistic borrowings from – or shift to – English and the potential fragmentation of Spanish. In the light of this, this book argues that the effects of the RAE's strategies of reference, categorization, argumentation and framing of Spanish have been twofold. First, they manufacture public consent to the consolidation of the RAE's authority and its renewed leadership of Spanish standardization in a rescaled panhispanic context – a context which now affects the language on a potentially global scale. Secondly, they manufacture consent to the public linguistic and social practices of 'natural' and 'necessary' standardization (involving linguistic, cultural and commercial institutions) which mask the hidden agenda of ensuring that Spain's Academy, IC, government and transnational corporations benefit from the continued expansion of Spanish around the world.

In reaching the conclusions of this study, a number of important gaps in the field of language ideological studies have been addressed. In line with Cameron's discussion of 'verbal hygiene' (1995), one question I have not asked here is 'should we standardize/prescribe?' I have instead sought to 'pose searching questions about who prescribes for whom, what they prescribe, how and for what purposes' (Cameron 1995: 11). In recognizing that the RAE sees its role as a leader among the associated Academies in language debates regarding the Spanish language as a whole, I have identified 'who prescribes' and 'for whom'. The former is not necessarily new knowledge: in Spain (and beyond), the Academy's prescriptive role has been recognized (and contested by many) throughout its history of almost 300 years. However, the network of other language authorities with whom the RAE collaborates – as well as the influential commercial bodies that fund much of this work – constitutes an identification of 'ideological brokers' in the Spanish context. The latter point regarding those 'for whom' the RAE prescribes confirms that the RAE does not see its sphere of influence as limited to Spain: instead, nowadays the entire Hispanic world is the 'market' within which its discourses, publications and events circulate.

In terms of 'what they prescribe', the focus of this book has not been on the linguistic minutiae laid down in the pages of the dictionaries, grammar or orthographic guides of the RAE and Academies. Rather, my aim has been to discuss the overarching arguments, conceptions and definitions of Spanish that

are prescribed through their ideological, institutional discourse. This prescriptive discourse takes place through the specific instrument of the newspaper press, and while this book focused on illustrative data from two publications within very specific time periods, a logical next step for scholarship is to investigate other newspapers. Such research should, crucially, include newspapers from other Spanish-speaking countries, which will reinforce the role of media discourse as a highly significant site and vehicle of prescriptive linguistic practices, yet would no doubt bring to the fore various nuanced, specific styles and practices of other (non-European) media publications. In this book, the purpose of prescriptive discourse has emerged clearly through a combination of explicit statements from the data and through the attention given to the socio-political context in which these statements occur – the RAE and associated language authorities standardize in order to preserve the linguistic unity of Spanish throughout the territories where it is spoken, and to perpetuate the notion of a harmonious language community. The result is a linguistic vehicle by means of which Spain's economic, political and cultural interests can be assured in an international context.

This book is not only a contribution to general scholarship on language ideologies, or media studies, but also intentionally addresses the fact that, specifically 'in the Hispanic intellectual context, there has been a remarkable absence of in-depth critical studies of the ideological/political foundations and implications of linguistic standardization' (Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2002a: xiii). In some measure, this study of what is arguably the most important standardizing institution in the Hispanic world contributes to a greater, and more in-depth, understanding of the ideology and process of the standardization of Spanish, as well as its social and political foundations on a global scale. In seeking to address the absence of studies that Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman acknowledge, I have in this book presented evidence of how a critical analysis of press articles related to language can show language authorities and their practices at work, reinforcing asymmetrical social relations in terms of who has authority to make decisions on behalf of all Spanish-speakers. The aim of the book has also been to raise awareness of how the press is an important and widely accessed discursive space in which language ideologies are staked out, and hence how these ideological underpinnings can be revealed using tools of CDA and language ideology. While standardization has been treated as an ideology (in agreement with Milroy and Milroy 1999), this study most certainly does not seek to negate the existence of standard Spanish or standard languages as 'myths', but rather seeks to problematize their construction, development and management across a population of over 400 million speakers. Equally, my aim

has not been that readers should discard standard languages/language standards or call for their demise, but instead to accept that standardization – and particularly standardization on a global panhispanic scale – is far from being a neutral or ‘value-free’ activity. Readers should therefore understand new facets of how standardized language norms are constructed and established, and, in doing so, be able to contest them through identifying and challenging those specific social, political and economic agents responsible for their creation.

This book has dealt with written textual data as the site of both the linguistic practices and metapragmatic discourse in which language ideologies are located. While this large corpus of textual data has enabled the recurring patterns of discourse and points of naturalization in ‘common-sense’ ideologies to emerge clearly in the analysis, further research will continue to illuminate embedded ideologies in media discourse by applying more of the approaches encompassed within the growing field of CDA. Furthermore, there are other features of press articles such as their design, layout and positioning on the printed/internet page that would sensibly make for an interesting and perceptive multimodal analysis (Kress and Leeuwen 1996, 2001), to include a consideration of the use of imagery in the presentation of RAE discourse, and such research would add not only to existing knowledge on language ideological studies, but on CDA and media studies too (see also Milani and Johnson 2010 for a similar call for a multimodal approach to language ideologies). Furthermore, a logical next step for researchers of standardization is to shed light on the many ways in which the top-down, hegemonic discourse of language authorities as considered here are contested by those holding alternative ideologies embedded in subaltern discourses. Future research that considers an approach from the ‘bottom up’ in order to consider how the RAE’s discourse is received by newspaper readers would undoubtedly move forward the scholarly and public understanding of currently dominated discourses. This would take the form of a medium- to large-scale attitudinal study which seeks to determine the extent to which the objectives of the RAE as outlined in this book are being received by those language users that the Academy aims to influence. It would also inform a deeper understanding (and exemplification) of the reception and processing of RAE ideologies and the response to these of readers of *El País*, *ABC*, and indeed any media publication, not only in Spain but in other Spanish-speaking countries too.

More detailed research should be carried out into the discourse of the other 21 Spanish Language Academies from the American countries. It would certainly be interesting to consider how similar data from leading newspapers in each of the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America compares with

that of Spain, to establish how processes and forms of entextualization in the American media practices differ from those in Europe. For example, is the Spanish language defined and constructed in similar or different ways? How is the authority and role of the individual national Academies (of say, Venezuela, Chile, Mexico) constructed in their public and media discourse, and what about their relationship with the influential RAE in Madrid? What more might this tell us about the authenticity of the claim that the Academies work 'en pie de igualdad'? (*El País* 16 October 2001). Another future avenue for research should take as a basis Haugen's claim that in nation-building there is always an urge for a nation-state to have its own language (Haugen 1972: 104), and develop this by building on the historical groundwork laid by Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman (2002a) on language in post-independence Latin American states. Such a study is of interest because it would investigate contemporary discourse and relationships between the RAE and the Academies in any Latin American states which have sought to enhance the distinctiveness of their 'national' varieties of Spanish as part of nation-building projects, both historically in terms of nineteenth-century post-independence, and with a more contemporary view. We as Hispanists and/or sociolinguists need to understand how the emerging PLP responds specifically to the details of linguistic diversity, particularly when this is used indexically to strengthen national language varieties in former colonial contexts where issues of linguistic imperialism still apply (Mar-Molinero and Paffey 2011, Phillipson 1992). The underlying assumption of this book, and all future language ideological studies is that 'ideologies of language are not about language alone' (Woolard 1998: 3), and this is particularly true of the ideology of standardization. What is achieved by language standardization is much more than just the convenient minimal variation of form and maximal variation of function in order to smooth communication within a given community. Ideologies of language standardization in the Spanish-speaking world (and beyond) are very clearly embedded in – and influential upon – issues of political, social, national, economic and other forms of power.

## Note

- 1 While Woolard specifies three locations of language ideologies, 'implicit pragmatics' relates largely to the contextualization cues which define spoken language, and hence does not feature in this book's analysis given my focus on the written language of press discourse.

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